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**REPORT**  
**ON**  
**SURVEY OF LABOUR CONDITIONS**  
**IN**  
**TEA PLANTATIONS AND TEA FACTORIES**  
**IN INDIA**  
**(1961-62)**



सत्यमेव जयते

**LABOUR BUREAU**  
**MINISTRY OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION**  
**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**





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## P R E F A C E

Industrial labour and its problems have been the subject of interest, though varying in degree and extent, ever since India entered the industrial field over a century ago. Today this interest has shifted from prevention of exploitation of labour to providing a fair deal and opportunities for a fuller life to labour. The growing realisation of this approach to problems of labour in India, in the context of present day planned economic development of the country, is provided a sound base by the Surveys that reveal true conditions of labour.

The last detailed survey, on a country-wide basis, of the working and living conditions of industrial labour was conducted by the Labour Investigation Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1944. The years that followed witnessed far-reaching changes in the set up of the country, its basic policies and national objectives. As a result, the long-term strategy for economic and industrial advance recognises the well-being of the working class as an essential factor in the overall stability and progress of the country. The adoption of this policy, in the changed circumstances of the country, has brought about a new awakening in the ranks of labour and afforded them much relief in various directions through legislation and other measures.

In order to assess the impact of these measures on the industrial labour and to appraise their present conditions, a scheme for a comprehensive Survey of Labour Conditions, was incorporated in the Second Five Year Plan and its execution was entrusted to the Labour Bureau. The Survey was conducted according to a phased programme in 46 industries. This report presents data regarding Tea Plantations and Tea Factories covered under the Scheme during 1961-62.

The present Survey differs considerably from similar investigations in the past in the matters of designs, scope and presentation of data. It has also certain distinguishing features. For example, it furnishes data separately for large and small establishments in various industries, makes a limited study of labour cost in relation to the benefits and amenities that the workers now enjoy, seeks to fill the gap in the statistics of labour turnover and absenteeism in the various industries and provides first-hand information on certain important aspects of labour-management relations. Attempt has also been made to collect and interpret data on certain conventional items in a more meaningful way. In the presentation of the data the effort has been to reduce the information into quantitative terms so as to serve as a bench-mark for purpose of evaluation of changes at a future date. Recourse to general description has been resorted to only where the other type of treatment was not possible.

In a Survey of this magnitude it was but natural that many problems had to be faced both in planning as well as execution. Most of these flowed from non-availability of up-to-date frames and absence or improper maintenance of records in many establishments. In many cases the field staff had almost to build up the required statistics from various sources. This naturally imposed a heavy demand on the managements and the Bureau is

deeply indebted to them for their whole-hearted co-operation. The co-operation and valuable assistance received from associations of employers and workers, particularly the Indian Tea Association, the United Planters' Association of Southern India, the Indian Tea Planters' Association, Chief Labour Commissioners, as well as Chief Inspector of Plantations and other officials of State Labour Departments is also gratefully acknowledged.

The debt of gratitude that I owe to the Central Statistical Organisation and the Chief Adviser of Factories for evincing keen interest in the Survey and rendering technical advice on various matters is indeed great. I am also thankful to the Employment Division of the Planning Commission for examining the schedule and instructions and offering useful suggestions. I am equally grateful to the Bureau of Labour Statistics, U.S.A., Social Surveys Division, Ministry of Labour and Social Service, U.K., Economics and Research Branch, Department of Labour, Canada and Labor Statistics and Research Division, Ministry of Labour, Japan, whose advice was sought on several technical matters.

The primary responsibility for conducting this Survey and bringing out the reports on individual industries was ably borne by Shri B. N. Srivastava, Deputy Director, whose experience and application came into full play in this assignment. On various statistical problems arising out of the Survey, the requisite technical advice was provided by other officers at Headquarters. In the drafting of the report, he received valuable assistance from Shri K. Lakshminarayanan, Research Officer. Sarvashri Krishan Kumar Sharma, A. K. Minocha, Punu Ram Sharma, Balkar Singh, Kanwar Singh, R. K. Pant, O. P. Oberoi, J. M. Gautam, K. C. Sharma and R. S. Tewari, computers assisted in computation of data. The field investigations were carried by Sarvashri V. S. Rao, S. K. Rao, P. Venkataraman, K. C. Luke, B. Raghavan, Harjinder Singh, S. L. Sawhney, R. K. Kapoor, A. K. Mitra, A. Chatterjee, S. M. Shinh, Anand Kumar Anand, A. S. Parmar, R. D. Aggarwal and Mahesh Chandra, under the supervision of Sarvashri Kirpal Singh, Harbans Singh, N. K. Sharma, Research Officers K. Lakshminarayanan and H. G. Gupta. To them all my thanks are due.

The views expressed in this Report are not those of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation, Government of India.

LABOUR BUREAU, SIMLA,

*Dated the 16th August, 1966.*

K. C. SEAL,  
*Director*

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. *Origin of Tea*

Tea is a small ever-green shrub and was used for medicinal purposes in the early days. Its original home-land was South-East Asia and its usefulness as a beverage was recognised by China several centuries ago. The Chinese variety, popularly known as green tea, is even now produced and consumed in considerable quantities in the Chinese mainland. Use of tea as a beverage first spread to Europe and now it is a popular drink throughout the world.

In India, tea was first discovered growing wild in Assam in 1823. Another thirty years passed before the first planting of tea began in South India. Since then the industry made a phenomenal progress. The Labour Investigation Committee, which conducted a detailed investigation into this industry in 1944-45 estimated the total area under tea at 338,317 hectares in British India and Indian States. There was some fall in the total area in subsequent years but since 1951 the area is again increasing steadily as will be evident from the following Statement. However, a noticeable feature is a steady decline in the total number of workers employed despite increase in the area under tea.

#### STATEMENT 1.1

*Area under Tea Plantations and Average Employment—1951, 1956—1964*

Year					Number of estates†	Area in hectares	Average number of workers employed (in thousand)
(1)					(2)	(3)	(4)
1951	..	..	..	..	6,214	316,870	1,018.0
1956	..	..	..	..	6,840	320,588	1,004.6
1957	..	..	..	..	7,123	323,284	1,004.3
1958	..	..	..	..	7,276	325,356	980.2
1959	..	..	..	..	8,084	326,494	919.4
1960	..	..	..	..	8,934	330,738	845.2
1961	..	..	..	..	9,499	331,229	822.8
1962	..	..	..	..	9,653	332,524	816.3*
1963	..	..	..	..	9,774	334,036	N.A.
1964	..	..	..	..	9 835*	337,874*	N.A.

*Source*—The Statistics—1964, Tea Board.

\*Provisional.

†Relates to estates registered with Tea Board.

N.A. Figures not available.

## 1.2. *Location of the Industry*

Tea is grown in India in the Assam valley, Surma valley (Cachar), Darjeeling, Dooars and Terai in West Bengal and Tripura in the North East India and in the hill slopes of Western Ghats in South India, *viz.*, the Nilgiris, Nilgiri-Wynad and Malabar-Wynad and Anamallais and high ranges in Kerala. Tea is also grown in isolated spots such as Ranchi, Dehra Dun, and the Kangra valley in Northern India and Madurai and Terunelveli districts of Madras and in a few pockets in Mysore. The main concentration, of the industry, however, is in the States of Assam, West Bengal, Madras and Kerala.

It will be seen from Statement 1.2 that Assam accounted for nearly 49 per cent. of the total area under tea in the entire country, followed by West Bengal (25 per cent.). Kerala and Madras, taken together accounted for about 22 per cent. of the total area under tea. Thus, it would be seen that a little over three-fourth of the total area under tea was in North India.

From figures relating to distribution of estates according to size given in Statement 1.2, it would be noticed that whereas in North India almost 85 per cent. of the estates were all holdings above 50 hectares, position was the reverse in South India where 96 per cent. of the estates were holdings up to 50 hectares only. In fact, nearly 91 per cent. of the estates were small holdings up to 5 hectares and only 3.6 per cent. admeasured more than 50 hectares. Since the Plantations Labour Act applies to estates admeasuring 10.117 hectares or more and in which 30 or more workers are employed, the existence of a large number of small holdings in South India is significant from the point of view of applicability of the Plantations Labour Act to workers employed in such estates.

## 1.3. *Importance of the Industry in the National Economy*

The industry plays a very important role in the national economy of the country. According to the statistics published by the Tea Board, in 1962, the latest year for which information is available, India accounted for about 39 per cent. of the total area under tea in principal tea producing countries of the world and for 3.7 per cent. of the total tea produced in these countries. As a foreign exchange earner, the importance of the industry is undisputed. The value of exports, according to the latest statistics available, has ranged from Rs. 123.38 crores in 1957 to Rs. 132.37 crores in 1963.

## 1.4. *Genesis of the Survey*

The first comprehensive survey of conditions of labour in various industries, including plantations, in India on a country wide basis was conducted by the Royal Commission on Labour in 1929—31. Their report and findings formed the basis of the various ameliorative measures. After a lapse of over a decade, *i.e.*, in 1944, the Government of India appointed another Committee, *viz.*, the Labour Investigation Committee, to enquire into the conditions of labour in all important industries. The Committee conducted detailed investigations in 38 industries, including tea plantations, during 1944-45 and, besides a main report on labour conditions in general, published individual reports in respect of various industries. These reports provided valuable material for the formulation of labour policy.

STATEMENT 1.2

*Distribution of Tea Plantations According to Size—1964*

State	Total area under tea (in hectares)	Total number of estates	Distribution of estates according to size					
			Up to 5 hectares	Above 5 hectares and below 50 hectares	Above 50 hectares and below 100 hectares	Above 100 hectares and below 200 hectares	Above 200 hectares and below 400 hectares	Above 400 hectares
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
<b>I. North India</b>								
1. Assam ..	168,251 (49.2)	747	14 (1.9)	110 (14.7)	113 (15.1)	153 (20.5)	254 (34.0)	103 (13.8)
2. West Bengal ..	84,830 (25.1)	297	6 (2.0)	9 (3.0)	19 (6.4)	76 (25.6)	125 (42.1)	62 (20.9)
3. Tripura ..	5,288 (1.6)	55	1 (1.8)	8 (14.6)	21 (38.2)	24 (43.6)	1 (1.8)	—
4. Bihar ..	534 (0.2)	3	—	1 (33.3)	—	—	2 (66.7)	—
5. Punjab ..	3,703 (1.1)	1,159	*	*	*	*	*	*
6. Himachal Pradesh ..	420 (0.1)	226	*	*	*	*	*	*
7. Uttar Pradesh ..	2,012 (0.6)	33	2 (6.1)	16 (48.5)	11 (33.3)	1 (3.0)	3 (9.1)	..
Sub-Total ..	232,098 (77.9)	2,520	23 (2.0)	144 (12.7)	164 (14.5)	254 (22.4)	385 (33.9)	165 (14.5)



STATEMENT 1.2—contd.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
<b>II. South India</b>								
1. Kerala ..	39,958 (11.8)	2,131	1,885 (88.5)	95 (4.5)	28 (1.3)	35 (1.6)	66 (3.1)	22 (1.0)
2. Madras ..	33,029 (9.8)	5,170	4,761 (92.1)	305 (5.9)	21 (0.4)	28 (0.5)	42 (0.8)	13 (0.3)
3. Mysore ..	1,759 (0.5)	14	1 (7.1)	5 (35.7)	—	6 (42.9)	1 (7.1)	1 (7.2)
Sub-Total ..	74,776 (22.1)	7,315	6,647 (90.9)	405 (5.5)	49 (0.7)	69 (0.9)	109 (1.5)	36 (0.5)
III. Grand Total for All-India	337,874	9,835	6,670 (78.9)	549 (6.5)	213 (2.5)	323 (3.8)	494 (5.9)	201 (2.4)

Source—Tea Statistics—1964, Tea Board.

\* Information relating to distribution of estates according to size is not available.

Note—(1) Figures in brackets in col. (2) are percentages of area in the State to the total area under tea in the country, as a whole.

(2) Figures in brackets in col. (4) to (9) against sub-total of I and III are percentages to total number of estates excluding those in Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. Similarly, totals under these columns exclude figures relating to Punjab and Himachal Pradesh.

The years that followed witnessed many changes of far reaching significance. For instance, many legislative measures were adopted to improve working and living conditions and several schemes were introduced for promoting welfare and social security of workers. The setting up of the adjudication machinery also led to improvement in conditions of work and wages in various industries. Above all, the attainment of Independence by the country gave a new status to the working classes. In view of these developments, the Ministry of Labour and Employment as well as the Planning Commission considered it necessary that a fresh comprehensive survey of labour conditions in various industries should be conducted so that it may be possible to assess the effects of the various measures and obtain a precise picture of the existing conditions and problems of labour for purposes of deciding the future course of action. Accordingly, a scheme for the conduct of a Survey of Labour Conditions was included in the Second Five Year Plan and the Labour Bureau was entrusted with the execution of the Scheme.

### 1.5. *Scope and Design*

A note appended to the report gives details relating to the sample design and method of estimation adopted. In view of the absence of a complete list of all tea plantations, the Survey was confined to tea plantations covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 and listed with the State Governments. Since tea plantations were highly concentrated in Assam and Tripura, West Bengal and Southern India, it was considered desirable to obtain separate information for them and hence they were treated as separate regional strata. States in other centres were clubbed together to form the Residual stratum.

Earlier investigations had indicated existence of wide variations in conditions of work, standards of welfare amenities, etc., in the establishments of different size groups in various industries. It was, therefore, considered desirable to collect data separately for establishments of different sizes. In the light of the resources available and from the point of practicability it was decided that for the purposes of the Survey, tea plantations in the different strata may be divided into two size groups, *viz.*, large and small. For this purpose, the average employment size of the plantations in the various centres in the country was used. It was felt that a sample of 25 per cent. in the case of large and 12.5 per cent. in the case of small plantations would yield reliable results. Experience of Occupational Wage Survey indicated that there was practically no closures of tea plantations and hence the sampling fraction adopted was 25 per cent. in the case of large estates and 12.5 per cent. for small estates. The following Statement (No. 1.3) shows the number of tea plantations together with the number of workers employed therein (a) in the frame, (b) in the samples selected, and (c) actually covered.

From the figures given in the statement it would be seen that the Survey ultimately covered 17 per cent. of tea plantations and about 21 per cent. of the workers employed therein. Since only those plantations came in the sample as featured in the frame and as it was not possible to take into account new estates which came into being during the period of the Survey, the information given in this report should be treated to relate to conditions in those tea plantations which were in existence during the period to which the frame relates (*i.e.*, 1960) and which continued to exist at the time of the Survey.

## STATEMENT 1.3

*Number of Tea Plantations and Persons Employed therein in the Frame,  
in the Samples Selected and Actually Covered by the Survey*

Centre	In the frame (1960)		In the samples selected		In the samples ultimately covered	
	Number of estates	Number of workers employed	Number of estates	Number of workers employed	Number of estates	Number of workers employed
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. <i>Assam and Tripura</i> ..	699	4,19,617	122	89,018	121 (17·31)	88,869 (21·18)
(a) Large estates ..	276	3,06,805	69	75,028	69 (25·00)	75,028 (24·45)
(b) Small estates ..	423	1,12,812	53	13,990	52 (12·29)	13,841 (12·27)
2. <i>West Bengal</i> ..	279	1,94,399	51	42,601	48 (17·20)	40,371 (20·77)
(a) Large estates ..	122	1,34,339	31	34,853	29 (23·77)	32,718 (24·35)
(b) Small estates ..	157	60,060	20	7,748	19 (12·10)	7,653 (12·74)
3. <i>Southern India</i> ..	266	1,49,897	48	33,258	47 (17·67)	33,237 (22·17)
(a) Large estates ..	118	1,15,620	30	29,350	30 (25·42)	29,350 (25·38)
(b) Small estates ..	148	34,277	18	3,908	17 (11·49)	3,887 (11·34)
4. <i>Residual</i> ..	36	4,441	6	955	6 (16·67)	955 (21·50)
(a) Large estates ..	13	2,859	3	729	3 (23·08)	729 (25·50)
(b) Small estates ..	23	1,582	3	226	3 (13·04)	226 (14·29)
5. <i>All-India</i> ..	1,280	7,68,354	227	1,65,832	222 (17·34)	1,63,432 (21·27)
(a) Large estates ..	529	5,59,623	133	1,39,960	131 (24·76)	1,37,825 (24·63)
(b) Small estates ..	751	2,08,731	94	25,872	91 (12·12)	25,607 (12·27)

NOTE—Figures within brackets in cols. (6) and (7) are percentages to the total number of estates and workers as given in cols. (2) and (3) respectively.

The data were collected in a specially designed schedule\* by personal visits of the field staff of the Bureau. With a view to testing the schedule and instructions prepared for the Survey as also to impart training to the field staff, a pilot enquiry was conducted. On the basis of the experience of this enquiry, the schedule and instructions were suitably revised. Tea plantations have two seasons, i.e., a busy season and a slack season, and the period from September to January is considered to be a very busy one as plucking operation is in full swing. Therefore, the specified date selected for purposes of collecting data on employment, wages and earnings, etc., was 30th September, 1961 as it fell during the busy season and it was felt that collection of data for this period would enable a better appreciation of various aspects of labour in the industry. The main field enquiry in tea plantations was launched in October, 1961 and completed in August, 1962. Since the enquiry in essence was during 1961-62, the data, except where specifically mentioned, should be treated to relate to this period.

As mentioned earlier tea plantations were covered by the Labour Investigation Committee in the course of their enquiry of plantations industries. With a view to indicating the developments and changes which have taken place since then, some remarks have been given in the report regarding the position at the time of the Committee's enquiry and the present Survey. Since there are differences in the scope of previous enquiry and the present Survey, the comparisons, wherever made, should be treated to be only broadly valid.

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\*The schedule was the same as used for other industries, a copy of which has been published as an Appendix to the Report on Survey of Labour Conditions in Silk Factories in India. Only some minor changes were made to collect certain additional details relevant to plantations industry.

## CHAPTER II

### EMPLOYMENT

During recent years there has been an almost gradual fall in the number of workers employed in tea plantations. In 1942, when the Labour Investigation Committee conducted the enquiry, the estimated employment was 9.26 lakhs. The figure increased to 10.18 lakhs in 1951. There was some fall in subsequent years but in 1956 the figure again was 10.05 lakhs. Since then there has been a gradual fall and in 1961 the average daily employment was 8.23 lakhs only, indicating a fall of nearly 19 per cent. since 1951. Most of the fall occurred in North-East India, comprising in the main Assam and West Bengal. In these two States, employment started declining since 1958. It seems that the tea estates, specially in North-East India, were saddled with surplus labour force. This problem in fact came up before the 9th Session of the Industrial Committee on Plantations in August, 1960. Obviously the estates have been shedding their surplus labour force. The one-man Committee (consisting of Shri N. N. Chatterjee, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment) appointed by the Government of India on employment situation in plantation, has observed as follows: "In a number of gardens not all the vacancies which arose since 1959 have been filled up. Taking advantage of the natural wastage in order to reduce the labour force—whatever be the reasons for such reduction—appears to be a fairly wide-spread practice."\* However, despite the fall in employment the Tea Plantation Industry continues to be one of the largest employer.

Employment Statistics pertaining to tea plantations given in Statement 1.1 relate to tea plantations in the whole country and cover all estates whether covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 or not. The Survey was, however, restricted to plantations admeasuring 10.117 hectares (i.e., 25 acres) or more and in which 30 or more workers were employed or were employed on any day of the preceding 12 months. According to the list of plantations covered under the Plantations Labour Act and maintained by the State Governments, the total number of such estates was 1,280 employing nearly 7.68 lakhs of workers in 1960. Since only such of the tea plantations which came within the purview of the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 were in the frame and consequently in the samples covered, the estimates of employment, etc., discussed in the following paragraphs should be treated to relate only to tea plantations coming within the purview of the Plantations Labour Act.

#### 2.1. *Composition of the Working Force*

With a view to maintaining comparability as well as uniformity of statistics obtained from different tea estates, data pertaining to employment were collected for a fixed date, i.e., 30th September, 1961. The results of the Survey indicate that on this date the employment strength of tea plantations covered under the Plantations Labour Act was nearly 9.66 lakhs in the industry, in the country as a whole. This figure is higher than the one

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\* Source—Industrial Relations Letter dated December 24, 1965 of India Press Agency—p. 3.

given earlier for 1961 primarily because the former refers to a fixed date which was in the height of busy season of the industry whereas the latter is the average daily employment during the year as a whole. Moreover, the figure include persons not covered under the Plantations Labour Act. Of 9.66 lakh workers employed on 30th September, 1961, Assam and Tripura accounted for nearly 5.73 lakhs or 59.3 per cent. of the total employed; West Bengal and Southern India had 2.29 lakhs and 1.59 lakhs respectively, the corresponding percentages being 23.8 and 16.4. Estates in the Residual Group employed only 4.5 thousands or 0.5 per cent. of the total employment in the industry.

## 2.2. Distribution by Broad Occupational Groups

For purposes of the Survey, the classification\* of occupations was as follows—

- (1) Professional, Technical and Related Personnel.
- (2) Administrative, Executive and Managerial Personnel.
- (3) Clerical and Related Workers (including Supervisory).
- (4) Production and Related Workers (including Supervisory).
- (5) Watch and Ward and Other Services.

The following Statement 2.1 gives the estimated total number of employees by broad occupational groups in tea plantations in the country:—

### STATEMENT 2.1

#### *Estimated Distribution of Workers by Broad Occupational Groups— September, 1961*

Centre	Estimated Number of Workers†					Total
	Professional, Technical and Related Personnel	Administrative, Executive and Managerial Personnel	Clerical and Related Workers (including Supervisory)	Production and Related Workers (including Supervisory)	Watch and Ward and Other Services	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	3,141 (0.5)	1,174 (0.2)	6,237 (1.1)	5,20,249 (90.8)	42,408 (7.4)	5,73,209 (100.0)
2. West Bengal ..	1,274 (0.5)	593 (0.3)	2,161 (0.9)	2,14,228 (93.4)	11,155 (4.9)	2,29,411 (100.0)
3. Southern India ..	895 (0.6)	361 (0.2)	1,056 (0.7)	1,50,844 (95.0)	5,590 (3.5)	1,58,746 (100.0)
4. Residual .. ..	—	11 (0.2)	18 (0.4)	4,334 (96.5)	131 (2.9)	4,494 (100.0)
5. All-India .. ..	5,310 (0.6)	2,139 (0.2)	9,472 (1.0)	8,89,655 (92.1)	59,284 (6.1)	9,65,860 (100.0)

\* The Classification was based on the International Standard Classification of occupations as adopted by the International Labour Organisation.

† Relate to workers covered as well as not covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951.

As is evident from the above statistics 'Production and Related Workers' constituted the bulk of the working force accounting for about 92 per cent. of the total employed in the industry. The percentage of production workers varied from 91 per cent. in Assam and Tripura to 96 in the Residual Group. There was practically no difference in this matter as between the estates of small or large size groups in the different centres. Next in the order of importance were the persons in the group 'Watch and Ward and Other Services' accounting for 6 per cent. of the total number of workers in the industry as a whole. Persons included in the broad group 'Clerical and Related Workers (including Supervisory)' constituted only one per cent. and those holding professional, technical or administrative, executive and managerial posts together accounted for less than one per cent. of the total employed in the industry. There was practically no material variation in the pattern of distribution of workers according to broad groups as between the different centres.

It may be relevant to point out in this connection that classification of employees as 'Production and Related Workers', 'Watch and Ward and Other Services', etc., is not rigidly followed in plantations. Workers in plantations are generally classified into two categories, i.e., (1) field labour or garden labour, and (2) staff. All persons in the first category are generally daily-rated while those included in the second category are usually monthly-rated. Staff members generally hold supervisory position *vis-a-vis* field labour and persons included in this group are clerks and related workers, medical staff (doctors, nurses, compounders, etc.), field conductors (i.e., production supervisors), teachers, lorry drivers, electricians, artisans, etc. When once a worker is recruited as a field labourer, he is expected to attend to any type of work. For example, a worker who might be attending to work such as weeding, manuring, etc., may be required to work as a watchman, and *vice-versa*. Since minimum wages are the same for all time-rated workers, no problem is involved in shifting of workers from one job to another and there is a constant inter-change of jobs.

Another factor worthy of note is constant interchange of workers from estate to factory and *vice-versa* wherever there is a tea factory also. Excepting a few categories of workers, such as tea conductors, tea makers, etc., persons who attend to unskilled work in the factory or in the estate are diverted from estate to factory and *vice-versa* according to the exigency of work. The factories do have some permanent strength but during the busy season, more reinforcement is effected from the estate, which constitute the main pool of workers. It was observed in many cases that factory muster rolls contained only the names of permanent workers employed regularly for the work in the factory and no account was taken in the muster rolls of those workers who are diverted from estates to factories.

### 2.3. Workers Not Covered under the Plantations Labour Act

The definition of 'worker' given in the Plantation Labour Act cover all persons employed to do any work, skilled, unskilled, manual or clerical, but does not include medical officers, managerial personnel, persons employed temporarily for work relating to construction, development or maintenance of buildings, roads, bridges or canals, as also persons drawing over Rs. 300 per month as wages.

Data collected during the Survey show that persons who were not deemed to be workers by managements were those excluded by the definition in the Act and they constituted a very small proportion to the total working force. The details are given in the following Statement 2.2.

# STATEMENT 2.2

## Estimated Number of Persons Covered and Not Covered under the Plantations Labour Act—September, 1961

Centre	Professional Technical Personnel		Administrative Executive and Managerial Personnel		Chemical and Related Workers (including Supervisory)		Peonies and Related Workers (including Supervisory)		Watch and Ward and Other Services		Total	
	Covered	Not covered	Covered	Not covered	Covered	Not covered	Covered	Not covered	Covered	Not covered	Covered	Not covered
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
1. Assam and Tripura	2,458 (78.3)	683 (21.7)	84 (7.2)	1,000 (92.8)	5,632 (90.3)	605 (9.7)	5,201,249 (100.0)	—	12,408 (100.0)	—	5,70,831 (99.6)	2,875 (0.4)
2. West Bengal ..	881 (69.2)	393 (30.8)	4 (0.7)	589 (99.3)	1,987 (92.0)	174 (8.0)	2,14,216 (100.0)	12 (*)	11,100 (99.5)	55 (0.5)	2,28,188 (99.5)	1,223 (0.5)
3. Southern India	765 (85.5)	1,30 (14.5)	—	361 (100.0)	926 (87.7)	130 (12.3)	1,76,816 (100.0)	28 (*)	5,507 (98.5)	83 (1.5)	1,58,014 (99.5)	732 (0.5)
4. Residual ..	—	—	—	11 (100.0)	18 (100.0)	—	4,334 (100.0)	—	131 (100.0)	—	4,483 (99.8)	11 (0.2)
.. All-India ..	4,104 (77.3)	1,206 (22.7)	88 (4.1)	2,051 (95.9)	8,563 (90.4)	909 (9.6)	8,89,615 (100.0)	40 (*)	59,146 (99.8)	128 (0.2)	9,01,516 (99.6)	4,344 (0.4)

Note: (1) Persons shown in col. 9 were production supervisors getting more than Rs. 500 p.m. and hence not covered.

(2) Figures in brackets are percentages to the respective group totals (i.e., covered and not covered taken together).

\*Indicates that the percentage is less than 0.05.



## 2.4. Employment of Women

A striking feature of the labour force in plantations in the country in 1944, about which the Labour Investigation Committee had made a specific mention, was the employment of women and children in large numbers in all the centres. At that time the proportion of women to the total working force varied as between the different centres. In Assam and Bengal the labour force comprised an almost equal number of men and women and in South India women out-numbered men workers.

The main reasons found by the Committee for employment of women workers in such large numbers were (i) recruitment of workers on a family basis rather than on an individual basis; (ii) the work in plantations was akin to that of agriculture and women workers, hailing mostly from rural areas had no difficulty in picking up the work; and (iii) migration of workers along with their families placing almost an obligation on managements to provide work to members of worker's family as well. The position with regard to employment of women remained almost unchanged at the time of the present Survey also. In fact, employment of women has shown increase in some of the centres. The following Statement 2.3 gives details of the estimated number of workers classified according to men, women, adolescents\* and children† in the different centres—

STATEMENT 2.3

*Proportion of Men, Women, Adolescents and Children in the Working Force of Tea Plantations—September, 1961*

Centre	Estimated Number of Workers Employed‡				
	Men	Women	Adolescents	Children	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Assam and Tripura .. ..	2,64,528 (46·1)	2,70,391 (47·2)	55 (§)	38,235 (6·7)	5,73,209 (100·0)
2. West Bengal .. ..	1,03,414 (45·1)	1,11,182 (48·4)	3,814 (1·7)	11,001 (4·8)	2,29,411 (100·0)
3. Southern India .. ..	68,927 (43·4)	81,581 (51·4)	4,285 (2·7)	3,953 (2·5)	1,58,746 (100·0)
4. Residual .. ..	1,620 (36·0)	2,227 (50·9)	—	587 (13·1)	4,494 (100·0)
5. All-India .. ..	4,3,489 (45·4)	4,65,441 (48·2)	8,154 (0·8)	53,776 (5·6)	9,65,860 (100·0)

\*i.e., persons who had completed their fifteenth year but had not completed their eighteenth year.

†i.e., persons who had not completed their fifteenth year.

‡Relate to workers 'covered' as well as 'not covered' under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951.

§Indicates that the percentage was less than 0·05.

NOTE—Figures in brackets are percentages to the respective totals in column (6).

It is significant to note that women workers out-numbered men in all the centres of the industry. The Survey results show that women were employed in all the estates surveyed in the different centres. There appears to be no special reason for their employment in large numbers excepting that since the recruitment is done on a family basis and, since the work in plantations does not require any skill, no difficulty is faced in getting the work done by women workers who are available within the estate. In fact, it was noticed in South India that for plucking work, the employers preferred women only who, with their soft fingers and inherent patience do the plucking of tea leaves without spoiling the plants. This probably explains the higher proportion of women there than in any other major centre.

As regards jobs on which women were employed, it may be stated that in plantations, there is no rigid classification of workers according to the occupations in which they are engaged. The entire working force comes under two broad categories: *i.e.*, (1) garden labour or field labour, and (2) staff. The bulk of the working force constitutes the first category and those in the second are few in number. All operations connected with the plantations are allotted to garden or field labour. When once a woman worker is appointed as a garden labourer (or field worker), she may be required to attend to any type of work, that may be assigned to her. It was, therefore, not possible to collect data relating to proportion of women employed in the different occupations. Generally speaking, the jobs on which women workers were usually employed were plucking, weeding, manuring, etc., coming in the broad group 'Production and Related Workers'. In fact, out of the estimated total number of about 4.65 lakh women workers, almost all were engaged on production jobs in the plantations. Among the non-production jobs on which women were found to be employed were those of sweepers and *crèche ayahs* falling in the group 'Watch and Ward and Other Services', teachers, nurses, midwives and doctors in the broad group 'Professional, Technical and Related Personnel'. Women were rarely appointed to posts involving managerial, executive or administrative work, nor were they employed for clerical and allied jobs.

## 2.5. *Adolescents*

Employment of adolescents (*i.e.*, persons between the ages of 15 and 18) is a peculiar feature in the plantation industry. In fact, adolescents emerge as a distinct category of the working force. The Labour Investigation Committee did not make any specific mention about this category but employment of adolescents seems to have been in vogue even at the time of their enquiry. Adolescents were found to be employed in about 17 per cent. of tea plantations in the industry as a whole. The percentage of estates employing adolescents was nearly 46 in Southern India, 34 in West Bengal and it was only one per cent. in Assam and Tripura. No adolescents were found to be employed in any of the sampled estates in the Residual Group.

Adolescents, wherever employed were mainly attending to such jobs as weeding, manuring and plucking in all the centres. Some of them were also engaged as sweepers

## 2.6. *Child Labour\**

At the time the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their enquiry, children were found to be employed in all the centres surveyed by them. The percentage of child workers was 15 in Assam, about 20 in Bengal and about 10 in the tea estates in Southern India.† The results of the present Survey indicate some improvement in the matter. As can be seen from Statement 2.3 the proportion of children employed in September, 1961 was only about 5.6 per cent. of the total working force in the country. This is obviously due to imposition of restriction on employment of children with the enactment of the Plantations Labour Act, 1951. Despite the fall in percentage the Survey results show that employment of child labour continues to be fairly extensive. The estimated percentage of tea estates employing them at the time of the Survey was nearly 71 in the country. The percentage of such estates was 84 in West Bengal, 80 in Assam and Tripura, 46 in the Residual Centre and 35 in Southern India. These figures, however, do not indicate the real extent of child labour in the different centres. For instance, as could be seen from Statement 2.3 though in the Residual Group only 46 per cent. of estates employed children yet the percentage of child workers to the total working force was the highest here, being 13 as against between 2.5 and 6.7 elsewhere.

Children, wherever employed, were mostly engaged for production jobs such as weeding, manuring, plucking, etc. In a few cases, they were also engaged as sweepers, cattle boys, etc.

Even though the Plantations Labour Act stipulates that children should carry tokens giving reference to certificate of fitness, it was noticed that this provision of the law was not being followed. The managements of most of the defaulting estates contended that they were employing children only after they were duly certified by the doctors to be fit for employment.

## 2.7. *Contract Labour*

The Plantations Labour Act, 1951 excludes from its purview 'any person temporarily employed in the plantation in any work relating to the construction, development or maintenance of buildings, roads, bridges, drains or canals'. Since the scope of the Survey was restricted to persons covered under the Plantations Labour Act and since contract labour was generally engaged for the above mentioned items of work only, no data were collected in respect of workers engaged in such operations. Contractors engaged their own labour and the managements had nothing to do with such workers as they were directly controlled by the contractors. The work was also for a specified duration.

However, it was noticed that in three sampled units, in Assam and Tripura, the system of engaging contract labour for regular work of the estate was in vogue. The reason adduced by the concerned management was that due to rush of work during the busy season, contract labour had to be engaged. The proportion of contract labour to the total employed in Assam and Tripura was, however, practically negligible.

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\*Persons below the age of 15.

†Source—Report on an Enquiry into Conditions of Labour. In Plantations in India by D.V. Rege, I.C.S., p. 182.

## 2.8. Time and Piece-rated Workers

In tea plantations, both the systems of payment, *i.e.*, time as well as piece-rates were in vogue at the time of the Survey. The following Statement 2.4 shows the distribution of production workers according to time or piece-rate systems of payment:—

STATEMENT 2.4

*Proportion of Time and Piece-rated Production Workers—September, 1961*

Centre	Estimated number of production workers*	Percentage of production workers	
		Time-rated	Piece-rated
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	5,20,249	58.3	41.7
2. West Bengal ..	2,14,216	95.3	4.7
3. Southern India ..	1,50,816	72.4	27.6
4. Residual ..	4,334	63.3	36.7
5. All-India ..	8,89,615	69.6	30.4

\*Relate to workers covered under the Plantations Labour Act only.

In the industry in the country as a whole, it is estimated that nearly 70 per cent. of the workers were time-rated and the rest were employed on a piece-rate basis. The piece rate system was found to exist in almost all the centres, although the proportion of such workers was very low in West Bengal. Plucking of tea leaves was generally being paid on a piece-rate basis everywhere. Only in Madras all operations, including plucking were being paid on a time-rate basis. In West Bengal, all workers were generally time-rated only, but whenever the casual labourers were engaged they were paid on a piece-rate basis. Hence the low proportion of piece-rated workers in this centre. Thus, it may be stated that barring the plucking operation, as also pruning in a few cases, workers employed for various operations in tea plantations were engaged on time-rates only.

## 2.9. Employment Status

At the time the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their enquiry, workers were generally classified into three categories: (a) garden labour (permanent), (b) outside labour (permanent), and (c) outside labour (temporary) in all the major centres surveyed by them. Since then, largely as a result of application of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946 to the industry, there has been a change in the classification. The model standing orders framed by the employers' associations in the different States were usually adopted by the member-estates after getting the necessary approval from the State authorities. The standing orders framed by the estates in Assam and Tripura as also West Bengal provided for the classification of workers into (1) permanent, (2) probationers, (3) outside

workers, (4) temporary, and (5) learners. In practice, however, estates in these areas classified workers into four categories only, *viz.*, (1) permanent (2) probationers, (3) temporary, and (4) casual. Garden labour was generally classified into permanent, temporary and casual, while 'staff members' were classified into permanent, probationers, and temporary. In South India, the model standing orders framed by the United Planters' Association of Southern India (UPASI) provided for the classification of all employees into two groups: (a) staff, and (b) workmen. Staff members comprised supervisory personnel and staff of medical and welfare establishments, artisans, subordinate staff, clerks and motor vehicle drivers employed on monthly-rates of pay and they were classified as permanent, probationer and temporary. Workmen, *i.e.*, the rest, were classified into two groups, *viz.*, permanent and casual. Workers employed in plantations located in the Residual Group were classified as permanent, temporary and casual. Data collected during the course of the Survey regarding employment status of production workers employed directly are given in Statement 2.5.

## STATEMENT 2.5

*Estimated Distribution of Production Workers According to Employment Status—September, 1961*

Centre	Estimated number of production workers*	Percentage of production workers who were						
		Perma- nent	Proba- tioner	Tempo- rary	Casual	Appren- tices	<i>Bailli</i>	Others
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	5,19,289†	79.4	—	8.7	11.9	—	—	†‡
2. West Bengal ..	2,14,216	88.7	0.2	0.4	10.7	—	—	—
3. Southern India	1,50,816	83.1	‡	3.4	10.5	—	—	—
4. Residual ..	4,334	70.7	—	13.2	16.1	—	—	—
5. All-India ..	8,88,655†	82.7	0.1	5.8	11.4	—	—	‡

\*Covered under the Plantations Labour Act.

†Does not include contract labour who numbered 900 according to the estimates of the Survey.

‡Indicates that the percentage was less than 0.05.

It is estimated that in the industry in the country, as a whole, nearly 83 per cent. of production workers were permanent and the rest were non-permanent. Next to permanent workers, casual workers accounted for about 11 per cent. of the total production workers employed; the remaining were temporary (6 per cent.). Probationers accounted for an almost insignificant proportion. The proportion of permanent workers ranged from 71 per cent. in the Residual Group to 89 per cent. in West Bengal. The high proportion of permanent workers in almost all the centres indicates the stability of the working force in tea plantations in the country.

## 2.10. Length of Service

Data regarding length of service of production and related workers (including supervisory) employed directly and covered under the Plantations Labour Act, were collected during the course of the Survey. It may be mentioned that even though the managements are required to maintain a leave register in respect of each employee showing, *inter alia*, the date of appointment of each person, it was observed that some of the estates did not maintain such registers and some which did keep them did not have the details regarding the date of appointment. Consequently, data collected from such units was based on the information given by the managements. Data collected during the course of the Survey concerning length of service of production workers are given in the following Statement 2.6:

STATEMENT 2.6

*Estimated Distribution of Production Workers Directly Employed According to Length of Service—September, 1961*

Centre	Estimated number of production workers* employed	Percentage of production workers with a service of				
		Less than one year	One or more but less than 5 years	5 or more but less than 10 years	10 or more but less than 15 years	15 years or more
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	5,18,590†	21·8	22·9	50·8	2·5	2·0
2. West Bengal ..	2,14,216	12·7	10·1	22·4	20·8	34·0
3. Southern India ..	1,50,816	19·5	15·7	15·2	23·3	26·3
4. Residual ..	4,334	23·2	29·5	18·0	14·4	9·9
5. All-India ..	8,87,956†	19·2	18·6	37·8	10·5	13·9

\*Information relates to workers covered under the Plantations Labour Act.

†Details regarding length of service could not be collected in respect of worker employed in some of the estates and hence the difference between these figures and those given in earlier Statement 2·2.

It is estimated that in the industry as a whole, 19 per cent. of the workers were in the service group 'less than one year' and an almost equal number in the service group 'one year or more but less than 5 years', 38 per cent. had a service of '5 years or more but less than 10 years' and the rest (24 per cent.) had a service of '10 years or more'. The position differed as between the different service groups in the different centres. Whereas in Assam and Tripura, almost 51 per cent. of the workers were in the service group '5 years or more but less than 10 years', in West Bengal, majority of workers (55 per cent.) were having 10 or more years of service. Similarly, in Southern India almost 50 per cent. were having a service length of 10 or more years but in the Residual Group nearly 58 per cent. of the workers were having a service of less than 5 years.

## 2.11. Absenteeism

During the course of the Survey, data on absenteeism relating to production workers, other than those employed on a casual basis, were collected for a period of 12 months ending with 30th September, 1961. The Bureau very much desired to collect data of absences according to causes. However, it was found that the relevant records for the purpose were not being maintained by many plantations. Therefore, it could not collect detailed information on the subject and had to be satisfied with such general information as was given by the managements.

The following Statement 2.7 gives the absenteeism rate in tea plantations in the different centres—

### STATEMENT 2.7

*Estimated Rate of Absenteeism in Tea Plantations—October, 1960 to September, 1961*

Month	Absenteeism rate in				
	Assam and Tripura	West Bengal	Southern India	Residual	All-India
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
October, 1960 .. ..	20.2	23.2	15.5	11.4	20.1
November, 1960 .. ..	20.3	18.6	15.9	11.2	19.1
December, 1960 .. ..	22.4	18.0	15.1	10.3	20.1
January, 1961 .. ..	16.5	15.8	20.0	10.8	16.9
February, 1961 .. ..	28.8	35.8	28.7	18.8	30.5
March, 1961 .. ..	28.6	26.7	21.6	12.3	26.8
April, 1961 .. ..	19.8	21.3	17.5	17.1	19.8
May, 1961 .. ..	19.0	18.6	16.5	16.0	18.5
June, 1961 .. ..	17.9	20.5	19.5	17.0	18.8
July, 1961 .. ..	19.0	22.6	22.4	17.3	20.4
August, 1961 .. ..	20.8	24.2	17.0	16.3	21.0
September, 1961 .. ..	19.2	23.6	16.4	11.9	19.7
Average for October, 1960 to September, 1961 .. ..	21.0	22.3	18.8	14.1	20.9

The average rate of absenteeism\* in Tea Plantations Industry in the country as a whole during the period October, 1960 to September, 1961

\*The rate of absenteeism is the percentage of man-days lost to the total man-days scheduled to work. Days lost on account of 'lay off', strikes and lockouts have been ignored wherever such details were available separately.

works out to nearly 21 per cent. The percentage of absenteeism was about 20 in large estates and nearly 23 in small estates. Since factors contributing towards absenteeism differ from centre to centre, the rate of absenteeism, in the different size groups as also variations as between the different months, etc., are discussed below separately for each centre:—

(a) *Assam and Tripura*—The statistics of absenteeism collected during the Survey indicate that the rate of absenteeism in the centre as a whole was 21 per cent. during the 12 months ending 30th September, 1961. The percentage of absenteeism was higher in small estates than in large ones, the respective percentage being 23.5 and 20.0. As regards pattern of absenteeism during the different months in estates of the two size groups, it is noticed that it is more or less the same. The rate of absenteeism was the highest in the months of February and March. These are lean months for the industry in this area and consequently the managements generally allow workers to avail annual leave during this period. The *Holi* festival also falls during this period. Absenteeism rate was high during the month of December as well, the rate being 22.4 per cent. The main reason for this seems to be that winter paddy crop becomes ripe at this time of the year and some of the workers get busy with harvesting operations. The causes for slightly more absences during certain other months were also found to be mostly agricultural operations and festivals. For instance, there are some important festivals (like *Durga Puja*) in the months of October and November. In these months the winter paddy crop is also ready for harvesting. The sowing of rice crop is done during April and May in Assam and Tripura and in August the autumn crop is harvested and sowing is done for the winter crop.

(b) *West Bengal*—The results of the Survey reveal that the average rate of absenteeism in West Bengal tea plantations was 22.3 per cent. during the twelve months ending 30th September, 1961. As in the case of Assam and Tripura, the percentage of absenteeism was slightly higher in small estates than in large ones, being 23.2 and 22.0 respectively. As regards variations between the different months, the rate was the highest during February (35.8 per cent.) followed by March (26.7 per cent.). It was noticed that these months are 'slack season' for the industry in this area and consequently the managements generally allow workers to go on annual leave. High rate of absenteeism was also noticed during the months of August, September and October, obviously due to agricultural operations as in West Bengal harvesting of autumn rice crop is done during this period. In August sowing of winter crop is also done. A contributory factor for higher absenteeism during the month of October seems to be *Durga Puja*.

(c) *Southern India*—The rate of absenteeism in tea plantations in Southern India was on an average 18.8 per cent. during the 12 months ending 30th September, 1961. As everywhere else, the rate of absenteeism was slightly more in small estates than in large ones, the respective percentages being 19.5 and 18.6. As regards variations between the different months, the rate of absenteeism was the highest, *viz.*, 28.7 per cent. during the month of February. The main reason for high rate of absenteeism during this month, as in other centres, seems to be the fact that this month is a slack period and the managements generally allow workers to go on annual



leave. Absenteeism was high during some of the other months also, i.e., 22.4 per cent. in July, 21.6 per cent. in March, 20.0 per cent. in January and 19.5 per cent. in June. June and July are the months of heavy rainfall in the plantation areas in South India and therefore workers are often forced to stay away from work. During January one of the major festivals of the South, viz., *Pongal*, takes place. In addition, it is also the harvesting period and marriages are generally solemnised at this time of the year. In some of the plantations, the slack period continues till March and therefore, workers are permitted to avail of the earned leave due to them. A contributory factor for higher absenteeism during the first three months of the year is reported to be the tendency among workers to avail of the leave due to them, immediately after the close of the year.

(d) *Residual Group*—Centres included in this group were Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. All the estates in this stratum were in the small size group. The results of the Survey indicate that the rate of absenteeism during the 12 months ending September, 1961 was 14.1 per cent. The absenteeism rate was the highest, viz., 18.8 per cent. in February. High rate of absenteeism was also noticed during the months of May to August. Broad reasons for the high rate of absenteeism were intensity of cold in February, festivals and marriages in April, harvesting and marriage season in May, sowing in June, rainy season in July and festivals and marriages in August.

The figures given above show that absenteeism in plantations in the Residual Group was appreciably lower than in other major centres.

## 2.12. Labour Turnover

Statistics of labour turnover were also collected for the same period and the same group of workers as for absenteeism. The results are given in the following Statements 2.8 and 2.9 separately for accessions and separations—

### STATEMENT 2.8

#### *Estimated Rate of Accessions in Tea Plantations—October, 1960 to September, 1961*

Month	Assam and Tripura	West Bengal	Southern India	Residual	All- India
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
October, 1960 .. .. .	0.5	*	2.0	0.9	0.6
November, 1960 .. .. .	0.5	*	1.7	1.4	0.6
December, 1960 .. .. .	1.4	0.2	1.9	0.7	1.2
January, 1961 .. .. .	1.6	0.1	2.2	5.0	1.3
February, 1961 .. .. .	0.7	0.1	2.1	0.1	0.8
March, 1961 .. .. .	1.1	0.5	2.3	3.6	1.1
April, 1961 .. .. .	1.8	0.2	2.6	19.9	1.6
May, 1961 .. .. .	2.7	0.5	3.6	3.9	2.3
June, 1961 .. .. .	2.1	0.2	2.5	2.4	1.7
July, 1961 .. .. .	1.4	0.2	3.2	4.8	1.4
August, 1961 .. .. .	1.3	*	2.2	2.2	1.1
September, 1961 .. .. .	0.8	0.1	2.9	0.5	1.0
Average for October, 1960 to September, 1961 .. .. .	1.3	0.2	2.4	4.0	1.2

\*Indicates that the percentage was less than 0.05.

## STATEMENT 2.9

*Estimated Rate of Separations in Tea Plantations—October, 1960 to September, 1961*

Month	Assam and Tripura	West Bengal	Southern India	Residual	All-India
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
October, 1960 .. ..	1.6	0.2	2.1	5.3	1.4
November, 1960 .. ..	2.2	0.4	3.3	1.4	2.0
December, 1960 .. ..	2.2	0.7	1.9	2.2	1.8
January, 1961 .. ..	1.5	0.4	1.8	2.5	1.3
February, 1961 .. ..	2.1	0.4	2.0	0.7	1.7
March, 1961 .. ..	1.3	0.5	1.8	5.5	1.2
April, 1961 .. ..	0.9	0.5	2.8	5.0	1.2
May, 1961 .. ..	0.8	0.3	2.6	9.6	1.0
June, 1961 .. ..	0.9	0.4	2.8	3.7	1.1
July, 1961 .. ..	0.9	0.3	3.0	5.5	1.1
August, 1961 .. ..	0.6	0.3	2.5	5.4	0.9
September, 1961 .. ..	1.3	0.4	2.1	0.7	1.2
Average for October, 1960 to September, 1961 .. ..	1.4	0.4	2.4	4.0	1.3

The above statistics indicate that there was not much turnover of the working force in this industry, the rate of accession and separation being of the order of one per cent. each. But as already stated, the scope of the labour turnover data relate to permanent, probationer and temporary workers and exclude casual workers. Obviously, if casual labourers are also taken into account, the turnover rate would have been somewhat high since nearly 11 per cent. of the production workers were engaged on a casual basis in the industry as a whole. Such workers were engaged during the busy season and their services were terminated as soon as the work for which they were engaged was over.

Data collected during the Survey relating to separations by causes are given in the following Statement 2.10:—

## STATEMENT 2.10

*Separations by Causes in Tea Plantations During October, 1960 to September, 1961*

Centre	Causes of separations (percentages)			
	Discharge or Dismissals	Quits*	Retirement or Death	Others
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. Assam and Tripura .. ..	57.4	37.5	5.1	—
2. West Bengal .. ..	8.4	71.2	20.4	—
3. Southern India .. ..	76.6	18.7	4.7	—
4. Residual .. ..	1.2	96.4	2.4	—
5. All-India .. ..	58.7	35.2	6.1	—

\*Quits are termination of employment initiated by employers because of acceptance of jobs elsewhere, dissatisfaction, marriage, maternity, ill-health, unauthorised absence, etc.

In the industry in the country as a whole, the chief cause of separation was 'discharge or dismissal' of workers by the managements and this accounted for nearly 59 per cent. of the total separations in the industry. The next important cause was "quits" which accounted for about 35 per cent. of the total separations. Retirement or death was only a minor cause constituting nearly 6 per cent. of the total separations. As regards individual centres, the major cause of separation was 'discharge or dismissal' in Southern India and Assam and Tripura, the percentage of separations on account of this cause being 77 and 57 respectively. But the chief cause was 'quits' in West Bengal accounting for nearly 71 per cent. of the separations. In the Residual Group on the other hand 'quits' accounted for 96 per cent. of the total separations.

### 2.13. Recruitment

Since plantations generally developed in remote and hilly areas, the question of adequate labour-supply was a vexed problem in early years. Employers had to depend entirely on imported labour, often from distant places outside their State, and had to rely on various sources and agencies for this purpose, e.g., recruiting agents in Assam, *Sardars* in areas other than Assam in North-East India, and *Kanganies* in South India. The Labour Investigation Committee, which conducted a detailed investigation in plantations, had discussed at length the various systems of recruitment which were prevalent in the different centres at the time of their Survey. They severely criticised the *Kangani* system which they found was full of abuse and recommended its abolition.

Since the time of the Committee's enquiry there has been a noticeable change in the method of recruitment in almost all the centres of the industry. It was found at the time of the present Survey that in North East India there was no longer the problem of shortage of labour. There was now an almost settled labour force in the area and instead of sending agents to distant places employers could recruit workers directly. In fact there were some pockets of surplus labour force. The Ninth Session of the Industrial Committee on Plantations reviewed the policy of recruitment of labour for Assam tea gardens in August, 1960 and decided that no fresh recruitment should be made from outside Assam except with the permission of the Central Government and that movement of labour from surplus to deficit areas within Assam should be encouraged with the help of Special Employment Exchanges. Thus, the practice, which was adopted at the time of the present Survey was that the Employer's Association maintained a list of estates which had surplus labour and other estates needing workers were advised by the Association to absorb the surplus labour from those estates to the extent of their requirement. In other cases, estates recruited relatives of their workers or engaged *basti* labour from adjoining *bastis* to cope up with the rush of work.

In plantations in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, estates usually recruited workers from nearby villages and there was no problem involved in recruitment.

In Southern India, the question of abolition of the *Kangani* system was first considered by the 3rd Session of the Industrial Committee on Plantations in 1950. On the basis of the deliberations of the Committee and in consultation with the State Governments, the Government of India formulated a scheme limiting the number of workers under each *Kangani*

to 40 and providing for the establishment of estate gangs. They also suggested various other measures with a view to curbing and eradicating the evil. In Madras State, an agreement known as 'Valparai Agreement' was reached between employers and representatives of *Kanganyies* in 1958 for the abolition of the *Kanganani* system. At the time of the Survey, the *kanganani* system no longer existed in tea plantations in Madras State. *Kanganyies* were either absorbed as *Maistries* (Labour Supervisors) or were allowed to retire after receiving compensation as per the terms of the agreement between the parties. In Kerala, a Committee consisting of the representatives of employers and *Kanganyies* under the chairmanship of Shri Balagangadhara Menon was appointed in 1957. The Committee suggested total abolition of the *Kanganani* system, with effect from 1st April, 1959, and made certain recommendations for the rehabilitation of the *Kanganyies* and payment of compensation to those *Kanganyies* who were not willing to continue in the estates. The recommendations of the Committee were accepted by the State Government with some modifications in December, 1959. However, the employers did not agree to implement them and the matter was still under consideration of the State Government at the time of the Survey.† However, managements of several estates had concluded individual agreements by means of which their old *Kanganyies* were either rehabilitated as Labour Supervisors or were paid compensation if they were reluctant to continue in service. Similar agreements were also concluded by some of the managements in Mysore.

The Survey results show that out of the estimated working force of nearly 9.6 lakhs in September, 1961 in the country, almost 76 per cent. of them were those who were recruited directly by the managements at the estate gates. The following Statement 2.11 gives details for the different centres:—

STATEMENT 2.11  
*System of Recruiting in Tea Plantations—1961-1962*

Centre	Estimated number of workers** employed in the industry (in thousands)	Per centage of workers recruited according to the system of recruitment							
		Direct Recruitment			Recruitment through intermediaries such as <i>Maistries</i> , <i>Sardars</i> , Labour Contractors, and <i>Kanganyies</i>	Through Tea District Labour Association	Through Head Office	Through advertisement test or interview	Employment Exchange
		At the Plantation gates	Through departmental Heads	Labour Office					
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
1. Assam and Tripura	569.9	83.9	10.0	—	3.1	2.8	0.1	0.1	—
2. West Bengal ..	228.2	73.4	—	—	18.9	7.3	—	0.4	—
3. Southern India ..	158.0	52.0	0.6	0.1	47.2	—	—	0.1	—
4. Residual ..	4.5	99.8	0.2	—	—	—	—	—	—
5. All-India ..	960.6	76.2	6.1	*	14.1	3.4	*	0.2	—

\*\*Workers covered under the Plantations Labour Act and employed direct (i.e. excluding contract Labour).

\*Indicates that the percentage was less than 0.05.

†It is now understood that in September, 1962, an agreement was reached between the parties through the agency of the Plantations Labour Committee and the *Kanganani* system no longer exists in the State.

It is clear from the statistics given in Statement 2.11 that direct recruitment by the managements was the universal practice in all the centres. The significant proportion of workers recruited through intermediaries (like *Kanganies* in Southern India) only indicates that the workers who were brought by these intermediaries were still in service, although as already stated earlier, the practice of direct recruitment by the managements has virtually replaced all other methods involving intermediaries.

#### 2.14. *Regulation of Employment of Casual Labour*

The practice of employing casual labour was in vogue in all the centres of the industry. However, nowhere there was any regular or *ad-hoc* arrangement for systematising or regulating the employment of such labour. Casual labour was engaged according to the needs of the managements and final absorption into permanent cadre was purely at the discretion of the managements.

#### 2.15. *Training and Apprenticeship*

In tea plantations there is no skill required for any operation excepting that for plucking and pruning operations a little care on the part of the workers is needed. No work, therefore, involves any special training or apprenticeship and the job is learnt by the workers by associating themselves with the old workers who are already on the job. Hence, in none of the estates there was any system of training or apprenticeship.

## CHAPTER III

### WAGES AND EARNINGS

#### 3.1. *Minimum Wages in Tea Plantations*

Till the time of the enquiry of the Labour Investigation Committee and a few years thereafter, wage rates of workers employed in tea plantations were governed by mutual agreements between associations of employers and unions of workers. As a result, time-rates of wages were generally uniform in various plantation districts in the different States.

The Labour Investigation Committee reported that in Assam, payment was generally based upon piece-rates. There were two kinds of piece work systems. The first system, which has been in existence since long, was the *hazira* and *ticca* system. Usually each worker was assigned some task which he had to complete to earn his *hazira*. The task varied from unit to unit but it generally related to a duration of about 5 hours of work in a day. After finishing the *hazira* task, the worker was free to go or take up some more work. The earnings accruing from the additional task were called *ticca*. Even though it was not incumbent on the part of managements having *hazira* system to offer opportunity for earning *ticca*, yet in practice, the labourers generally got opportunities to earn *ticca* earnings also. The rate for *hazira* for men workers varied from 5 annas (Re. 0.31) in the Surma valley to 6 annas (Re. 0.37) per day in the Lakhimpur area. The rate for women ranged from 4 annas (Re. 0.25) to 5 annas (Re. 0.31) per day and children received annas 2 to 3 (Re. 0.12 to Re. 0.19) per day. The other system of wage payment was the unit system. Under this system, the labourer was not given any specific task but was allowed to do as much as he could do in a day and at the end of the day, he earned an amount corresponding to the number of units done by him. The rate per unit was practically the same for the different items of work. Wages for pluckers were given by weight, except in the beginning and in end of the season when a *hazira* was given irrespective of the leaf brought in. The rate of payment was usually one anna for 5 pounds of leaf in the Assam Valley and for 8 to 10 pounds in the Surma Valley.

In West Bengal, the wage system was the same as in Assam except that *ticca* was called *doubli* in the Dooars area. The *hazira* for men, women and children was 4 annas (Re. 0.25), 3 annas (Re. 0.19) and 1½ to 2 annas (Re. 0.09 to Re. 0.12) respectively in the Dooars and the Terai areas, while the rate was higher by one anna (Re. 0.06) in the Darjeeling area.

In South India, where both the time as well as piece rate systems prevailed, all workers, other than those who were engaged on plucking, were paid on a time rate basis. The rates were 7 annas (Re. 0.44) for men, 5 annas (Re. 0.31) for women and 3 to 4½ annas (Re. 0.19 to Re. 0.28) for children. Pluckers were paid at the rate of 3 to 4 pies\* per pound of tea leaves plucked.

In the estates located in North India, comprising Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, the wage rate varied from centre to centre. In the Dehra Dun area, the rate ranged from 6 to 9 annas per day (Re. 0.37 to Re. 0.56) whereas in the Kangra Valley, pluckers received generally 4 to 5 annas (Re. 0.25 to Re. 0.31) per day.

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\*Roughly Re. 0.02.

There was an upward movement of wages after 1945, generally on the basis of agreements between the parties during 1947-48. The wage rates, i.e., basic wage and dearness allowance, of an adult male worker ranged from Re. 0.84 to Re. 0.87 in Assam, and West Bengal, and from Re. 0.94 to Rs. 1.27 in Southern India, in 1947-48. With the inclusion of plantations industry among the scheduled employments under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, wages of workers employed in the Tea Plantations Industry came within the sphere of State regulation. All the concerned State Governments fixed minimum rates of wages under the Minimum Wages Act. The wage rates originally fixed as well as the subsequent revisions and the wage rates prevalent at the time of the Survey are discussed below for each centre.

(1) *Assam and Tripura*

(a) *Assam*—The minimum rates of wages under the Minimum Wages Act were initially fixed by the State Government in March, 1952. These rates, which comprised basic wages and dearness allowance, varied according to areas. In the case of ordinary unskilled labourers daily rate fixed inclusive of dearness allowance, ranged from Re. 0.94 to Rs. 1.06 in the case of men, from Re. 0.84 to Re. 1.00 for women and for children\* it was a uniform rate of Re. 0.53. The dearness allowance component was roughly one-third of the total. Basic wages were further revised in 1952 and in 1959 the total emoluments were revised. Only in the Cachar District the rates were further revised in 1961. Thus the minimum rates in force at the time of the Survey were as follows:—

STATEMENT 3.1

*Minimum Rates of Wages in Assam Tea Plantations*

(In Rupees)

Area	Basic Wage			Dearness allowance			Total		
	Men	Women	Minors*	Men	Women	Minors*	Men	Women	Minors*
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
1. <i>Zone A:</i>									
Dibrugarh Sub-Division of Lakhimpur District and Sibsagar District.	1.52	1.45	0.75	0.37	0.31	0.16	1.89	1.76	0.91
2. <i>Zone B:</i>									
Lakhimpur Sub-Division of Lakhimpur District and Darrang District.	1.45	1.39	0.72	0.37	0.31	0.16	1.82	1.70	0.88
3. <i>Zone C:</i>									
Mikir Hills, Nowgong, Kamrup and Goalpara Districts.	1.45	1.39	0.72	0.31	0.31	0.16	1.76	1.70	0.88
4. Cachar District	1.22	1.16	0.68	0.31	0.31	0.15	1.53	1.47	0.83

\*Persons between the ages of 12 and 16.

Pluckers were being paid at the rate of Re. 0.08 per kilogram of green leaves. They were also being paid a daily allowance, which in the case of adults was Re. 0.50 in Sibsagar District and Dibrugarh sub-division, Re. 0.30 in Nowgang District and Re. 0.35 elsewhere. This allowance for minors was half of adults. In Cachar, there was no piece-rate as such, but the minimum wage was paid for a fixed task. For any quantities of green leaves plucked in excess of the fixed task, extra payment was made at rates ranging from Re. 0.02 to Re. 0.03 per Kg. of extra leaf plucked. Piece-rated workers were ensured the minimum time rate if his piece-rate earnings fell short on account of insufficiency of leaves in spite of his working full day.

There were tasks for almost all operations and these varied from estate to estate; but generally they were so fixed that the workers were able to complete them during the normal working hours of the day.

(b) *Tripura*—The minimum rates of wages of plantation workers in Tripura were initially fixed in 1952 and were revised in 1955. These revised rates were in force at the time of the Survey also and they were as under:—

(i) Garden Labour—	Wage rates per day							
	Hazira		Doubli		D.A.		Total	
	Rs.	a. p.	Rs.	a. p.	Rs.	a. p.	Rs.	a. p.
Male adults and adolescents .. ..	0	7	0	7	0	6	1	4
Female adults and adolescents .. ..	0	6	0	6	0	6	1	2
Employable children .. ..	0	4	0	4	0	2	0	10

(c) *West Bengal*—The minimum rates of wages were fixed for the first time under the Minimum Wages Act in December, 1951, but were revised in 1959. When the present Survey was conducted these revised rates were in force. They were as follows:—

STATEMENT 3.2  
*Minimum Rates of Wages in West Bengal*

Area	Rates (in Rupees)				Total
	Hazira		Doubli		
	Basic wage	Dearness allowance	Basic wage	Dearness allowance	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)

I. *Dooars and Terai*

(a) For gardens in the Dooars of 500 acres and over—					
(i) Adult males .. ..	0.62	0.41	0.62	0.19	1.84
(ii) Adult females and adolescents.	0.56	0.41	0.56	0.19	1.72
(iii) Employable child .. ..	0.35	0.22	0.24	0.09	1.00
(b) For all gardens in the Terai and gardens in the Dooars of below 500 acres—					
(i) Adult males .. ..	0.63	0.37	0.62	0.19	1.81
(ii) Adult females and adolescents	0.57	0.37	0.56	0.19	1.69
(iii) Employable child .. ..	0.35	0.22	0.24	0.09	1.00



For workers in the hill areas of Darjeeling only basic wages and dearness allowance were fixed. The daily basic wage fixed was Rs. 1.05 for adult males, Re. 1.00 for adult females and adolescents and Re. 0.50 for employable children. Dearness allowance was Re. 0.30 for children and Re. 0.40 for others.

(d) *Southern India*—In South India, the minimum rates of wages of plantation workers in Madras and Kerala\* were fixed in 1952. The rates fixed for Madras plantations were revised in 1956 on the basis of mutual agreement and these were in force at the time of the Survey. The rates were as follows—

STATEMENT 3.3  
*Minimum Rates of Wages in Madras*

Category	(In Rupees)	
	Estates with planted area of	
	200 or less	Above 200
(1)	(2)	(3)
Men .. .. .	1.56	1.72
Women .. .	1.12	1.31
Adolescents .. .	0.94	1.03
Children .. .	0.69	0.72

\*In area of the then Travancore-Cochin.

The wage rates in Kerala were further revised in January, 1958. On the basis of an agreement reached between the employer's association and worker's union under the auspices of the Industrial Committee on Plantations. When the Survey was conducted these were in force. They were as follows:—

STATEMENT 3.4  
*Minimum Rates of Wages in Kerala*

Category	(In Rupees)		
	Time-Rated Workers	Piece-Rated Workers	
		Piece-rate	Guaranteed Time-rate
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Men .. .	1.72	8 pies per lb. of leaf for the first 16 lbs. of leaves a day during the months of January, February and August and 6 pies per lb. for the first 21 lbs. plucked on a day during the other months of the year	0.87
Women .. .	1.31		0.69
Adolescents .. .	1.06		0.56
Children .. .	0.86		0.45

### Residual Group

(i) *Uttar Pradesh*—The minimum wage rate originally fixed in 1952 under the Minimum Wages Act was Re. 1.00 per day for an adult worker. The revision that took place in 1961 enhanced the wage rate of adult workers to Rs. 1.44 per day in case of daily rated workers and the rate of monthly rated workers was fixed at Rs. 37.50 per month. The above rate was applicable only to estates in the Dehra Dun area. For estates in other areas in U.P. the old rate of Re. 1.00 continued to be in force.

(ii) *Punjab*—The minimum rates of wages were originally fixed in 1952, but were revised in 1957. The revised daily rates were as follows: Adults males Re. 1.00, women Re. 0.69 and children Re. 0.50.

### 3.2. Wage Revision

Information relating to wage revision since 1956 collected during the Survey shows that there were wage revision on an industry-wide basis in all the States, except Tripura, where there was no wage revision after 1955. The rates of wages fixed by the Tripura Administration in 1955 continued to be in force at the time of the Survey. The details of these revisions have already been given above.

### 3.3. Pay Period

At the time of enquiry by the Labour Investigation Committee, the Payment of Wages Act was not applicable to plantation industry and consequently the wage period was not regulated by law. The Committee found that though in North India, the pay period did not exceed a month, in South India, the most predominant system was settlement of wages once in a year. With the application of the Payment of Wages Act, 1936 to the plantation industry in 1947, the pay period of workers in tea plantations in the different centres was regulated by law. Data collected during the Survey relating to pay period of workers are presented in the following Statement 3.5.

#### STATEMENT 3.5

*Distribution of Workers Employed in Tea Plantations according to their Pay Period—September, 1961*

Centre	Estimated number of workers *	Percentage of workers whose pay period was			
		Month	Fortnight	Week	Day
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Assam and Tripura .. ..	5,70,550†	4.7	49.1	46.2	—
2. West Bengal .. ..	2,28,188	32.2	12.5	55.3	—
3. Southern India .. ..	1,58,014	93.6	—	4.4	2.0
4. Residual .. ..	4,193	88.9	—	—	11.1
5. All-India .. ..	9,61,235†	26.2	32.1	41.3	0.4

\* Relate to workers covered under the Plantations Labour Act only.

† Does not include 281 workers engaged through contractors for whom the pay period was not available. Hence the difference between the estimated number of workers covered under the Plantations Labour Act as given in Statement 2.2 and this Statement.

It is estimated that in the industry in the country, as a whole, nearly 41 per cent. of the workers, received their wages once in a week, 32 per cent. once in a fortnight, 26 per cent. once in a month and only a negligible proportion of workers received their dues daily.

As regards individual centres of concentration, the position varied considerably. Whereas in Assam and Tripura, the predominant pay period was fortnight accounting for nearly 49 per cent. of workers, followed by 'week' accounting for 46 per cent. employed in this centre; the pay period in West Bengal was 'week' (for 55 per cent. of workers) followed by 'month' (for 32 per cent.). Estates in the small size groups in Assam and Tripura as well as West Bengal had "weekly" pay period for majority of their workers. In Southern India and the Residual centre, bulk of the working force received their dues once in a month. There was practically no difference between the estates in the small size and large size groups in Southern India in this regard.

The system of settlement of wages every day was in vogue only in Southern India and the Residual centre, the percentage of workers receiving their dues daily being 2 and 11 respectively. Daily payment was being made only to casual workers.

The practice of giving weekly advances to workers was widely prevalent in tea plantations in Southern India. Such advances were adjusted when the settlement of wages was made at the end of the month.

### 3.4. Average Daily Earnings

#### 3.4.1. All workers

In view of the fact that a detailed Occupational Wage Survey was conducted by the Bureau in 1958-59, no attempt was made in the course of the present Survey to collect data pertaining to earnings of workers by occupations. However, some statistics relating to earnings of broad groups of workers, e.g., all workers (i.e., all those covered under the Plantations Labour Act), all production workers (separately for men, women, adolescents and children), lowest paid workers, clerical and related workers and watch and ward and other related workers were collected. For maintaining comparability of the data, information relating to earnings was collected for one wage period immediately preceding 30th September, 1961. The information so collected is presented in the following Statement 3.6.

#### STATEMENT 3.6

#### *Estimated Average Daily Earnings of Workers in Tea Plantations—September, 1961*

Centre	(In Rupees)					
	Average Daily Earnings of					
	All workers*	Production workers				
		Men	Women	Adolescents	Children	All production workers
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	2.29	2.19	2.38	2.02	1.46	2.23
2. West Bengal ..	2.14	2.20	2.06	1.91	1.08	2.06
3. Southern India ..	1.86	2.03	1.67	1.26	0.97	1.80
4. Residual ..	1.41	1.43	1.41	—	0.97	1.38
5. All India ..	2.18	2.16	2.17	1.57	1.34	2.11

\* i.e., all those covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951.

It is estimated that the average daily earnings of "all workers" in the industry as a whole worked out to Rs. 2.18. The average daily earnings were the highest (Rs. 2.29) in Assam and Tripura, followed by West Bengal (Rs. 2.14). In Southern India, the average daily earnings were Rs. 1.86 while workers in the Residual centre received the least (Rs. 1.44).

### 3.4.2. *Production Workers*

Among production workers the average daily earnings were Rs. 2.11 in the industry in the country, as a whole. As in the case of 'all workers', the average daily earnings of production workers in Assam and Tripura were the highest (Rs. 2.23), followed by West Bengal (Rs. 2.06), Southern India (Rs. 1.80) and the Residual Group (Rs. 1.38). The main reason for higher earnings of workers in Assam and Tripura was that the rates of minimum wages fixed in this centre are higher than those in other centres. Moreover, the proportion of piece-rated workers was also the highest\* in this centre as compared to other centres and piece-rated workers generally earned more than the time-rated workers.

Men production workers earned on an average Rs. 2.16 a day in the industry in the country, as a whole. Excepting Assam and Tripura, where women earned higher earnings than men, in all other centres men invariably earned more than women. In fact wages fixed under the Minimum Wages Act, for men are slightly higher than the rates fixed for women in all centres. In Assam and Tripura, women were mostly engaged for plucking work which is generally paid on a piece rate basis. The proportion of piece-rated workers among women was higher than that of men. Since piece-rated workers are paid on the basis of their output, they invariably earn higher earnings than the time-rated workers. It is noticed that in this area while the percentage of piece-rated women workers out of the total piece-rated workers was as high as 73, the corresponding percentage of men was only 19, the rest being adolescents and children. Almost 59 per cent. of women workers in this region were piece-rated as against only about 20 per cent. of men. As such, their earnings are higher than those of men.

Women workers received on an average Rs. 2.17 per day in the industry as a whole. Their average daily earnings were Rs. 2.38 in Assam and Tripura, Rs. 2.06 in West Bengal, Rs. 1.67 in Southern India and Rs. 1.41 in the Residual centre. Adolescents earned on an average Rs. 1.57 a day in the industry in the country, as a whole. The average daily earnings were the highest in Assam and Tripura (Rs. 2.02) and the least (Rs. 1.26) in Southern India. Similarly, children earned the maximum in Assam and Tripura (Rs. 1.46) and the least (Rs. 0.97) in Southern India as well as the Residual centre. Thus, it would appear that earnings of men, women, adolescents and children were higher in Assam and Tripura than those employed in other centres.

### 3.4.3. *Lowest Paid Workers*

In plantations, as already stated earlier, there is no rigid classification of workers according to occupations. This is particularly so in regard to garden labour or field labour who are expected to attend to any type of work that may be assigned to them by the managements and such workers are shifted from one job to another depending upon the exigencies of work.

\*Reference Statement 2-4, p. 19.

Therefore, separate details of earnings of workers who were engaged in occupations which are normally the lowest paid could not be collected. Normally all time-rated workers, who are employed on a daily rate basis in plantations may be considered as the lowest paid workers. The main jobs on which the time-rated workers were employed were, weeding, pruning, manuring, shade lopping, and also plucking in certain areas (e.g., West Bengal, Madras). The rates of wages of these workers were the same as fixed by the State Governments for time-rated workers in the respective States and details of which have already been discussed earlier in this Chapter.

#### 3.4.4. Earnings of Clerical and Watch and Ward Staff

In the course of the Survey, data were also collected concerning earnings, without break-up by components, of clerical staff and persons employed in the group as "Watch and Ward and Other Services" and the results are given in the following Statement 3.7—

#### STATEMENT 3.7

*Estimated Average Daily Earnings of Clerical and Watch and Ward Staff in Tea Plantations—September, 1961*

						(In Rupees)	
Centre						Clerical and Related Workers (including Supervisory)	Watch and Ward and Other Services
(1)						(2)	(3)
1.	Assam and Tripura	..	..	..	..	7.65	2.00
2.	West Bengal	..	..	..	..	7.04	2.35
3.	Southern India	..	..	..	..	7.98	1.75
4.	Residual	..	..	..	..	4.57	1.79
5.	All India	..	..	..	..	7.54	2.04

The above figures when compared with those of production workers given in Statement 3.6 show that earnings of clerical staff everywhere were much higher. However, so far as watch and ward employees were concerned their earnings were higher than those of production workers only in West Bengal and the Residual Group. Elsewhere and in the country, as a whole, they were lower.

#### 3.5. Components of Earnings

The following Statement 3.8 gives the average daily earnings of 'all workers' by components in the Tea Plantations Industry in the different centres.

## STATEMENT 3.8

*Estimated Average Daily Earnings by Components of all Workers in Tea Plantations during September, 1961*

(In Rupees)										
Centre	Basic earnings, i.e., basic wage plus dearness allowance or consolidated wages	Pro-duction and/or Incentive Bonus	Night shift allowance	House rent allowance	Transport allowance	Over-time	Food grains concession	Other cash allowances	Other concessions in kind	Grand Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	2.12 (92.44)	0.11 (4.52)	—	*	*	*	0.02 (1.05)	0.04 (1.72)	*	2.29 (100.00)
2. West Bengal ..	1.57 (73.36)	0.40 (18.83)	—	—	*	0.01 (0.05)	0.10 (4.81)	0.03 (1.47)	0.03 (1.10)	2.14 (100.00)
3. Southern India ..	1.62 (86.97)	0.10 (9.97)	—	—	—	0.02 (1.01)	*	0.03 (1.89)	*	1.86 (100.00)
4. Residual ..	1.43 (99.46)	0.01 (0.38)	—	—	—	—	—	—	*	1.44 (100.00)
5. All India ..	1.90 (87.37)	0.19 (8.52)	—	*	*	0.01 (0.07)	0.04 (1.76)	0.03 (1.68)	0.01 (0.30)	2.18 (100.00)

\*Indicates that the amount was less than Re. 0.005.

### 3.5.1. Basic Earnings

Basic earnings, i.e., consolidated wages, basic wage and dearness allowance, wherever such an allowance was paid as a separate item, constituted the bulk accounting for as much as 87 per cent. of the total earnings of workers in the industry as a whole. The percentage of basic earnings was the highest (99.5) in the Residual Group, followed by Assam (92.4), Southern India (87.0) and only 73 in West Bengal. There was practically no difference between the estates of small or large size in various centres in the matter of share of basic earnings to total earnings.

### 3.5.2. Dearness Allowance

The practice of paying dearness allowance, as a separate component was widely prevalent in tea plantations in the different centres in the country. The system was in vogue in all the units surveyed in West Bengal, in nearly 97 per cent. of the estates in Assam and Tripura, and in about 88 per cent. of the units in Southern India. However, it was totally absent in the estates in the Residual Group. Thus, in the industry in the country as a whole, the system of payment of dearness allowance, as a separate component was prevalent in nearly 93 per cent. of the estates. Except for West Bengal and two of the sampled large estates in South India, nowhere dearness allowance was linked to any consumer price index number. Since

the system of payment of dearness allowance, its rate, method followed, etc., varied as between the different centres the details are discussed below separately for each centre:

(a) *Assam and Tripura*—In this centre, the practice was different for ordinary garden labour and those who were termed as 'staff' by managements. The dearness allowance fixed for ordinary workers, i.e., 'field labour' was paid at a flat rate along with the basic wage. The basic wage as well as dearness allowance was paid on a daily rate. The rate of dearness allowance for a male worker varied from Re. 0.31 in the Surma Valley district to Re. 0.37 in the Assam Valley.

For persons termed as 'staff' the dearness allowance which was being paid at the time of the Survey was based on an award of an Industrial Tribunal given in 1959. The Tribunal classified the estates into two categories, i.e., (1) gardens having an acreage of 300 and above, and (2) gardens with an acreage of less than 300. The dearness allowance was fixed for the first category at 25 per cent. of the basic salary subject to a minimum of Rs. 30 per mensem. For the second category it was Rs. 30 on the first hundred rupees of basic salary and 15 per cent. for the rest.

It is estimated that at the time of the Survey almost 82 per cent. of the estates were paying dearness allowance, at flat rates to their workers and on the basis of income slabs to their staff members. Seventeen per cent. of the estates were paying it at a flat rate to all their employees and the rest were paying at slab rates based on income groups.

(b) *West Bengal*—All the units surveyed had the system of paying a separate dearness allowance to their workers. For garden labour, i.e., other than those termed as staff, subordinate staff or artisans, the rate of dearness allowance was fixed by the Government of West Bengal along with the minimum wage rates. The rate of dearness allowance for adult male worker varied from Re. 0.40 per day in Darjeeling to Re. 0.50 per day in Dooars and Terai. The dearness allowance so fixed, the notification added should correspond to the average consumer price index number for the year 1958 as published by the competent authority appointed under 2(c) of the Minimum Wages Act. It was provided that dearness allowance was adjustable both upward and downward with the change in the consumer price index number, provided the change in the index number was by 20 points. The rate per point of increase fixed was 2 paise for all the centres.

As regards monthly-rated employees, who were termed as staff by the managements, the dearness allowance was paid as follows:—

- (a) Subordinate staff—50 per cent. of their basic pay per month.
- (b) Office staff—
  - (1) Those drawing a basic up to Rs. 100—33½ per cent. of basic pay subject to a minimum dearness allowance of Rs. 30 p.m.
  - (2) Those drawing Rs. 101 and above—25 per cent. of basic pay.

(c) *Southern India*—The system of paying dearness allowance as a separate component, it is estimated, was in vogue in nearly 88 per cent. of the estates in this centre. But the payment was restricted to monthly-rated employees termed as staff. Daily-rated production workers, who constituted the bulk of the working force, did not get any dearness allowance but received only consolidated wages. Staff members were being paid dearness allowance since 1947 at the rates notified by the United Planters' Association of Southern India. There was no revision since then. The rates fixed varied according to slab of basic pay and ranged between Rs. 33 per month for those getting a monthly basic pay up to Rs. 41, and Rs. 47 in the case of persons getting a basic pay of Rs. 74 or Rs. 75 per month. Those drawing more than Rs. 75 per month as basic pay were entitled to an extra dearness allowance calculated at the rate of Re. 0.12 for each additional rupee of basic pay when the Consumer Price Index Number for Madras City was above 200.

### 3.5.3. *Production/Incentive Bonus*

Next to basic earnings, production or incentive bonus was the important item accounting for 8.5 per cent. of the total daily earnings of a worker. The percentage of this item was the highest (18.8) in West Bengal, followed by Southern India (10.0) and Assam and Tripura (4.5). In the Residual Group, the percentage was negligible. The details of the system of paying production/incentive bonus are discussed below for each centre:

#### (a) *Assam and Tripura*

It is estimated that nearly 31 per cent. of the estates in this centre paid production/incentive bonus. The following were the types of payments made—

- (1) *Ticca pice*.
- (2) Over rate payment.
- (3) *Sardar's Plucking Commission* or allowance.
- (4) Production bonus for box makers.

(1) *Ticca pice* and over rate payment were made to pluckers who plucked over and above the norm fixed for plucking. There was no uniformity in the norms and they varied from area to area and even within an area from estate to estate. For instance, the norm fixed in the Cachar area was that a male plucker should pluck 17 kgs. of green tea leaves per day in some estates whereas in some others the minimum fixed was only 15 kgs. per day. The rate of payment for extra leaf plucked also varied from area to area. For instance, it was 2 paise for every extra Kg. of green leaves in some estates,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  paise in a few and in others 3 paise. The norms were only conventional and could be termed as 'task work' for purposes of earning the minimum wage fixed for the workers. Such payments were most prevalent in estates in the Cachar district.

(2) *Sardar's Plucking Commission*—Under this system whenever workers under the control of a *Sardar* plucked green leaves over and above the 'task work' fixed by the managements the concerned *Sardar* was paid a commission on the basis of extra earnings of those workers. The rate of



payment varied from 2 to 6 paise per rupee of extra earnings in estates in Sibsagar. In certain areas, e.g., Lakhimpur, it was paid at the rate of 24 paise per additional Kg. of leaves plucked over and above the norms fixed for the workers. In a few estates in Nowgong no norm was fixed and the Commission was paid at the rate of 4 paise per 100 Kgs. of green leaves plucked by workers.

### *Production Bonus for Box Makers*

The practice of paying production bonus for persons who were making boxes for purposes of putting the green leaves plucked, was in vogue in a few estates in the Darang district only. The norm fixed was ten boxes per day. When production exceeded 10 boxes, a bonus was paid at the rate ranging from Re. 0.94 to Re. 0.96 for additional 5 boxes.

#### *(b) West Bengal*

It is estimated that the system of paying production/incentive bonus to workers engaged in the plucking work was prevalent in nearly 88 per cent. of the estates in West Bengal. Such a bonus was paid whenever workers plucked leaves more than the norm fixed for them for earning the minimum wage. The norm varied from unit to unit even within a district, and from time to time. The quantity fixed for plucking by men ranged from 8 to 19 Kgs. per day, and for women 7 to 17 Kgs. per day. For children, the norm was invariably low. But the rate of payment was generally uniform, i.e., it was paid at the rate of 5.5 paise per Kg. of leaves plucked over and above the norms prevalent in the units.

#### *(c) Southern India*

*(1) Over Pound Allowance*—The practice of paying production or incentive bonus was in vogue in nearly 94 per cent. of the estates in Southern India. The payment was generally called as 'over pound allowance' or 'extra plucking allowance'.

The categories of workers who were entitled to this allowance were production workers who were engaged on plucking work. The payment was made to those workers who plucked over and above the norms fixed for earning the prescribed minimum wage. The norms varied from area to area, and even within an area from estate to estate as also from month to month. In Madras, where there is only time-rates of wages fixed for all operations including plucking, norms fixed were only conventional tasks, which the worker was supposed to finish during the working day. Generally speaking, estates in the Nilgiris district had fixed a norm both for men and women which ranged from  $9\frac{1}{2}$  to 14 Kgs. of green leaves per day and workers who plucked more than the norms were entitled to a bonus at the rate of 7 paise for each additional Kg. of green leaves plucked. The practice in the Valparai area of the Coimbatore district was different. Here the norms fixed were 11 Kgs. of green leaves for men and  $9\frac{1}{2}$  Kgs. for women. If workers plucked more than the above norms they were paid at the rate of 4.6 paise per Kg. for the entire quantity plucked. Those who plucked up to the norm fixed were not made any such payments but were given only the minimum wage.

In Kerala, where pluckers were mostly piece-rated, over pound allowance was paid to those who plucked more than the norms fixed, which was  $9\frac{1}{2}$  Kgs. per day. The rate of payment was generally 2 paise for every additional pound plucked.

(2) *Pruning Bonus*—Such a bonus was paid in Kerala to workers who were engaged on pruning work. No norms were fixed and pruners were paid at a flat rate of 12 paise per day worked. The payment was made with a view to ensuring that pruning work was attended to efficiently by the workers.

#### (d) *Residual Centre*

The system of paying incentive bonus for extra plucking was in vogue only in one sampled unit in this centre. In this unit workers who plucked more than the norm fixed, i.e., 6 Kgs. per day, were paid incentive bonus at the rate of 6 paise for each extra Kg. plucked.

#### 3.5.4. *Night-shift Allowance*

Due to the very nature of work there could be no night-shift in plantations and consequently no night-shift allowance was paid anywhere.

#### 3.5.5. *Attendance Bonus*

The system of payment of attendance bonus was reported only in two sampled unit in the Residual centre. In those units clothings were given depending upon the number of attendance put in by the workers. For example, if a male worker worked for 125 to 145 days in a year, he was given only a shirt, while those who put in an attendance of 145 to 175 days were supplied a shirt, a half pant and a cap. Workers who worked between 176 and 195 days received a shirt, a *pyjama* and a cap. While those who had worked for 196 or more days received coat also in addition to the above items.

#### 3.5.6. *House Rent Allowance*

The practice of paying house rent allowance was in vogue only in about 7 per cent. of the estates in Assam and Tripura (or nearly 4 per cent. of the units in the country as a whole). In these estates this allowance was paid only to clerical and other technical staff members who were not provided with any accommodation by the managements. The rate of the allowance varied from unit to unit but generally it ranged from Rs. 3.20 to Rs. 20 per month. In a few cases, it was paid at the rate ranging from 7½ to 10 per cent. of the basic pay of the employees. The concerned estates were mostly located in the Sibsagar district.

#### 3.5.7. *Transport or Conveyance Allowance*

The system of paying a conveyance allowance in the form of cycle allowance to some of the employees was widely prevalent in Assam and Tripura and West Bengal. It was in vogue in nearly 41 per cent. of the estates in Assam and Tripura, and in about 33 per cent. in West Bengal. No such system existed in estates in Southern India or the Residual Group. Thus, it is estimated that in the country as a whole, 31 per cent. of the estates had the practice of paying conveyance allowance. The categories of workers who were usually entitled to this allowance were clerical and technical staff who used their own cycles for official duty in the field. The rate of payment varied from unit to unit but it generally ranged from Rs. 5 to Rs. 20 per month in these centres. However, earnings from this item constituted only a negligible proportion of the total earnings of a worker in the industry as a whole.

### 3.5.8. Overtime Pay

Earnings on this item accounted for only an insignificant proportion of the workers' earnings in the industry, as a whole.

### 3.5.9. Other Cash Allowances

With the exception of the Residual Group everywhere else a wide variety of cash allowances were being paid to employees. In the country, as a whole, the share of these allowances to the total earnings, however, was not very material.\* The same was the case in the various centres.

Of the various cash allowances paid the most common was Servants Allowance which was invariably restricted to production supervisors (e.g., field conductors), technical and clerical personnel and others who were monthly rated and termed as 'staff' by the managements in the different centres.

In Assam and Tripura, where the system was in vogue in nearly 76 per cent of the units, this allowance was being paid either on the basis of an award of an Industrial Tribunal or as per the rates fixed by the Indian Tea Association for its member gardens. The allowance under the award was a certain percentage of basic pay, subject to a maximum of Rs. 40 per month. The Indian Tea Association rates varied from Rs. 27.50 to Rs. 55 per month according to the status of staff member or artisan.

In West Bengal, the practice of paying servant allowance was in vogue in nearly 79 per cent of the estates. As in the case of Assam and Tripura, only staff members were entitled to it. The rate varied from estate to estate and ranged from Rs. 10 to Rs. 56.25 per month.

In Southern India also, servant allowance was restricted to staff members only. The system was in vogue in nearly 88 per cent. of the estates. It was being paid at the rate of Rs. 35 per month as per the agreement between the United Planters' Association of Southern India and the Estates Staff Union of South India.

The other fairly common cash payment was *Sardari* Commission. It was in vogue in nearly 40 per cent of the estates in West Bengal and in nearly 18 per cent in Assam and Tripura. In Southern India, the payment was in the form of *Kangani* Commission and it was prevalent in nearly 11 per cent of the estates. Thus in the industry as a whole the practice of paying *Sardari* or *Kangani* Commission was in vogue in nearly 21 per cent of the estates. Such a commission was being paid to *Sardars* or *Kanganies*, who had brought workers to the estates, on the basis of earnings of workers under their control.

In Assam and Tripura, the practice varied from estate to estate. Some units paid the Commission as a percentage of earnings of the workers under the control of *Sardars*, the rate ranging from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 6 per cent. A few units paid on the basis of output of the workers whose work the *Sardars* were supervising. In such cases, the *hazri* leaf plucked by the workers were not taken into account, and Commission was paid on the *ticca* leaf only at the rates which varied considerably from estate to estate.

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\*i.e., constituting only 1.7 per cent of the total earnings.

In West Bengal, the Commission for *Sardars* was payable generally at the rate of one old pice\* per manday worked by the workers who were brought by them. In some estates, the Commission was paid at the rate of one old pice for *hazri* and one old pice for *doubly* on the attendance of the workers under them. In a few cases, the Commission was paid at the rate of 3 paise for each man-day put in by the workers under the control of *Sardars*.

In Southern India, the *Kangani* Commission was paid to each *Kangani* usually at the rate of one anna (Rs. 0.06) per day of attendance of each such worker brought by him who was still in service.

The system of *sardari* Commission was not reported in any of the sampled units surveyed in the Residual Group.

### 3.5.10. Food Grain Concession

This item constituted nearly 1.8 per cent of the total daily earnings of a worker in the industry. The practice of supplying food grains at concessional rates was prevalent in about 55 per cent of the units in the industry. The system was noticed mainly in Assam and Tripura (62 per cent of estates) and West Bengal (94 per cent of estates) only. The system was not reported in any of the sampled estates in Southern India or the Residual Group.

According to the practice prevalent in Assam and Tripura and West Bengal, all workers, i.e., garden labour as well as staff members, were supplied rice and/or *atta* at concessional rates. The quantum supplied and the price at which it was given varied from centre to centre. In Assam and Tripura, rice was supplied to workers at the rates ranging from Rs. 17 to Rs. 20 per maund.

In West Bengal, where the food grain concession was an important item, rice was supplied to workers at concessional rates which ranged from Rs. 15 per maund in Dooars and Terai to Rs. 17.50 per maund in Darjeeling.

### 3.5.11. Other Concessions in kind

This item formed a very insignificant proportion of the total daily earnings of worker in the industry. The items covered under this head were supply of firewood, kerosene oil, etc., to workers by the managements either at concessional rate or free of cost. The practice, though reported in a few estates in each centre, was not very common and the benefit was restricted to a few selected categories of employees, generally staff members.

### 3.6. Annual Travelling Allowance/Way Expenses

The Survey results show that there was a wide-spread practice of paying travelling allowance or way expenses to staff members and workers once in a year for going to their native places on earned leave. It is estimated that in 1961-62, such a practice existed in nearly 60 per cent of the estates in the industry in the country as a whole. The percentage was the highest (97) in Southern India, followed by Assam and Tripura (63) and it was only 25 in West Bengal. The system was completely absent in the Residual Group. Details of travelling allowance/way expenses are discussed below for each centre.

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\*Re. 0.02.

In *Assam and Tripura*, member estates of the Indian Tea Association (I.T.A.) were paying annual travelling allowance to clerical and technical employees and artisans, termed as 'staff' at the rate of three second class return fare, subject to a maximum of Rs. 200 to married persons and half of it to unmarried persons. Some of the estates which were not members of the I.T.A. were paying such an allowance at the rate fixed by the Industrial Tribunal in 1959. The maximum allowance fixed was Rs. 110 for married persons and Rs. 60 for single persons.

In West Bengal some of the member estates of the I.T.A. were paying travelling allowance to the 'staff' at the rate fixed by the Association as mentioned above.

In Southern India, the payment of way expenses to staff members was regulated by an agreement between the employees represented by the United Planters' Association of Southern India and Estates Staff Union of South India in 1957. Under this agreement, members of the staff were entitled to travelling expenses at the rate of Re. 0.04 per mile for self and wife, if receiving less than Rs. 50 as basic pay, and Re. 0.08 per mile if receiving a basic pay of Rs. 50 or more. The mileage for this purpose included journey from estate to the registered home address of the employee and back. Payment for wife was subject to her residing in the estate. So far as workers were concerned the payment was not regulated by any agreement. However, all the units, where the system existed, were found to be paying actual rail or bus fare for one way journey, i.e., either from the estate to worker's native place or *vice versa*. In some units, a *batta* of Re. 0.75 was also paid for each day of the journey.

### 3.7. Bonus

The system of paying bonus to workers in plantations in North-East India was first introduced in 1953-54 as a result of an arbitrations of the Commerce Minister of the Government of India. The amount of bonus, which was fixed on an *ad hoc* basis, ranged from Rs. 65 in Cachar to Rs. 130 in the Assam Valley; it varied from Rs. 55 in Darjeeling to Rs. 130 in the Dooars area of West Bengal. Thereafter, bonus was paid according to the prosperity of the concerns as per the agreements arrived at between the employers' associations and workers' unions. From the year, 1959 onwards, a system of bonus directly linked to profits of the concerns was introduced and the managements called this as a 'profit sharing bonus'. It has been reported that in Southern India, the practice of paying year-end bonus has been in vogue since 1947 and in the Residual Group since 1945.

The general practice in all the centres was that the question of bonus for each year was first discussed between the union representatives and the employers' associations with the help of the Plantations Labour Committees/Industrial Committee on Plantations or officials of the Labour Departments, and agreements relating to the quantum of bonus, etc., were arrived at. The employers' associations then advised their member-estates to give effect to the agreements and guide them as to the calculation of bonus, etc. Thus, it can be stated that the question of bonus for the plantation workers has been the subject of mutual discussion between the parties and the extent of benefit was naturally subjected to the bargaining power of the trade unions. In Assam and Tripura, at the time of the Survey, payment of profit-sharing bonus to workers and staff was regulated by an agreement known as the 'North-East India Tea Plantations Bonus Agreement of

1961'. The Agreement covered bonus payable for the years 1959, 1960 and 1961 and it provided that in each year of the agreement, in which the company made a profit, it should allocate for distributions amongst those of its workmen, who were entitled to bonus under the agreement, a sum equal to the following percentages of profits:

	West Bengal and Tripura	Cachar	Assam Valley
	%	%	%
Labour .. .. .	11	12	12
Sub staff and monthly rated workers .. .. .	1½	—	—
Clerical and medical staff including artisans and School teachers (West Bengal only) .. .. .	1½	2	2

The Agreement stipulated that employees receiving bonus at a higher rate would not be prejudicially affected. In Assam, all workers who worked for at least 60 days during the bonus year were entitled to bonus. In West Bengal, however, the benefit was restricted to permanent workers who attended work on at least 30 days during the year. Payment was made on the basis of the number of days worked by the workers. For purposes of calculation, one day worked by a female worker was treated as 1½ days. Minors were allowed bonus at half the rates at which adult female workers were paid. Members of subordinate staff, monthly-rated workers and clerical and medical personnel received bonus proportionate to the ratio of their basic salaries to the total salaries of the respective categories. One of the significant features of the Agreement was provision for the creation of a 'Bonus Fund' in all the estates, other than those in Cachar and Tripura. In addition to allocating profits for distribution as bonus to workers at the rates discussed above, each company, which was making a profit, was required to credit to the appropriate bonus fund on behalf of its workmen a sum equivalent to 1½ per cent of the profits made in 1959, 1 per cent of the profits in 1960 and ½ per cent of the profits made in 1961. In case any company made a loss or so small a profit that the minimum bonus payable to any workman fell below ten rupees, the Agreement provided that the 'Bonus Fund' should be utilised for paying the following minimum amount:

Category	Minimum bonus	Qualifying conditions
(a) Workers .. .. .	Rs. 10	of low rates: 30 days' work Female workers: 15 days' work
(b) Subordinate staff or monthly rated worker .. .. .	15	8 months' service
(c) Clerical and medical staff .. .. .	25	8 months' service

In Southern India, bonus payment was regulated by agreements between the Employers' Associations and workers' unions. The rate of payment of bonus varied from year to year and from State to State. The following Statement gives the details of rate of bonus in tea plantations in Madras and Kerala during the last five years for which payment was made—

### STATEMENT 3.9

#### *Rate of Bonus in Tea Plantations in Madras and Kerala States*

Year					Rate of Bonus as in	
					Madras	Kerala
(1)					(2)	(3)
					Percentage of wages	
1955	..	..	..	..	13½	8½ to 10½ % of wages.
1956	..	..	..	..	10½	8½ to 10½ % of wages.
1957	..	..	..	..	8½	6½ % of wages for estates above 100 acres 6 % of wages for estates below 100 acres
1958	..	..	..	..	8½	Same as for 1957.
1959	..	..	..	..	8½	6½ % of wages for estates above 100 acres 6 % of wages for estates below 100 acres 5½ % of wages for estates not covered by Plantations Labour Act.

For staff members, there was no specific agreement but bonus was being paid at the discretion of the managements. The quantum of bonus ranged from one months' basic pay and dearness allowance to 7 months' basic pay and in certain cases it was paid as a percentage of basic salary varying from 11 to 31 per cent of the total amount earned during the bonus period.

Annual bonus was also being paid by estates in the Residual Group generally on the basis of agreements entered into from year to year between individual employers and workers' unions. In all the estates paying bonus the payment was made to all categories of employees who had worked at least for 30 days, deducting the bonus period. The rate of bonus paid varied according to the attendances put in by the workers and ranged to 30 days' wages.

At the time of the Survey, it is estimated that the system of payment of some kind of bonus was in vogue in nearly 87 per cent of the estates in the industry. The following Statement gives details regarding the type of bonuses prevalent in the different centres:

**STATEMENT 3.10**  
**Bonus in Tea Plantations—1961-62**

Centre	Number of estates	Percent- age of estates paying bonus	Estimated percentage distribution of estates which were paying				Percentage of estates where bonus was being paid		
			Profit sharing bonus	Year-end bonus	Year-end bonus as well as profit sharing bonus	Festival bonus	At the discretion of managements	On the basis of mutual agreement between parties	At the discretion as well as on the basis of agreements*
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	679	87.4	90.2	—	—	9.8	11.2	88.8	—
2. West Bengal ..	273	83.6	71.5	19.6	5.3	3.6	10.6	69.7	19.7
3. Southern India ..	248	96.9	—	100.0	—	—	12.9	66.3	20.8
4. Residual ..	35	45.7	—	100.0	—	—	—	100.0	—
5. All India ..	1,235	87.3	64.8	27.9	1.1	6.2	11.3	79.9	8.8

\*These estimates were paying bonus at their discretion to certain categories of workers (e.g., clerical staff), whereas bonus to other workers was paid on the basis of mutual agreements between employers and workers.

NOTE.—Percentages in cols. (4) to (10) relate to total number of units paying bonus in col. (3).

Apart from the profit sharing bonus in Assam and Tripura, the system of paying festival bonus was also in vogue in the Cachar area of Assam. The bonus was usually paid at the time of *Fagua* and *Durga Puja* at the rate of Rs. 5 for each festival. Of the estates having such a system, nearly 80 per cent were paying to all employees and 9 per cent to only some categories of employees, e.g., clerical staff, etc., on the basis of mutual agreements and in the rest payment was based on the discretion of managements.

### 3.8. Fines and Deductions

The Labour Investigation Committee reported that fines were rare in plantations. It was, however, noticed that in West Bengal a few estates imposed fines for loss of implements, etc., and in Southern India managements imposed fines on workers if their cattle trespassed on estate land. The findings of the present Survey reveal that the system of imposing fines was altogether absent in all the centres of the industry. Deductions, wherever made, were only those as authorised under the Payment of Wages Act and they generally related to provident fund and recovery of weekly advance, etc.



## CHAPTER IV

### WORKING CONDITIONS

When the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their investigation in tea plantations in 1944-45, there was no law in the country† for regulating the conditions of work of plantation labour. The Committee reported that conditions varied considerably from place to place. Consequently, they recommended enactment of a Plantations Labour Code by the Government of India. The recommendation was accepted and in 1951 a Plantations Labour Act was passed which covered not only working conditions but other aspects as well. Thus, when the present Survey was conducted there was a law for regulating the working conditions, etc. The findings of the Survey relating to working conditions to tea plantations are discussed below.

#### 4.1. Shifts

Since the nature of work in plantations is akin to agriculture, the question of different shifts does not arise. In fact, there is only one shift during the day and there is no night shift at all. The shift usually starts in the morning and ends in the evening. The usual system is that *mistries* or watchmen give an indication through a bell, bugle or siren so as to enable workers, who generally live in the quarters in the estate itself, to reach the time office in time for a roll call. Thereafter, they are directed to the different areas according to the assignment of work that might be made by the Supervisors.

#### 4.2. Hours of Work

The Plantations Labour Act prescribes only weekly hours and provide that in the case of adult workers, it should not exceed 54. The Survey results show that the law was being complied with by the employers in all the centres. In 81 per cent of tea plantations in the country, as a whole, the weekly hours of work for adults ranged only from 46 to 50. The percentage of estates having weekly hours ranging between 46 and 50 was 78 in Assam and Tripura, 73 in West Bengal, 97 in Southern India and 88 in the Residual Group. There was practically no variation in this regard as between the large and small size estates. The following Statement 4.1 gives details of weekly hours of work in the different centres—

STATEMENT 4.1

*Weekly Hours of Work in Tea Plantations—1961-62*

Centre	Number of estates	Percentage of estates where weekly hours of work for majority of workers were for										
		Adults					Children					
		Up to 40 hours	41 to 45 hours	46 to 50 hours	More than 50 hrs.	Not fixed	Less than 30 hrs.	30 to 40 hours	41 to 45 hours	46 to 50 hours	More than 50 hrs.	Not fixed
		(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
1. Assam and Tripura	679	2.3	9.3	77.9	—	10.5	9.4	53.9	3.6	4.2	—	28.9
2. West Bengal	273	4.5	17.9	73.1	4.5	—	3.6	60.8	19.6	17.9	—	7.1*
3. Southern India	248	—	—	96.9	—	3.1	27.3	45.4	—	27.3	—	—
4. Residual	35	—	—	87.7	12.3	—	—	100.0	—	—	—	—
5. All-India	1,235	2.2	9.1	81.0	1.3	6.4	9.4	53.7	5.0	10.0	—	19.9*

\*Information relating to weekly hours of work for children were not available in respect of 5.3 per cent of estates in West Bengal or 1.4 per cent in the country as a whole.

†There was a certain amount of regulation of conditions in the former Cochin State. In this State there were the Plantations Labour Rules administered by the State Government since 1st May, 1937.

The daily hours of work, excluding rest interval, were usually 8 in nearly 71 per cent of tea plantations in the country as a whole; they were less than 8 in 20 per cent., more than 8 in an insignificant percentage\* and in the rest (8 per cent) the daily hours of work were not fixed in the sense that the work was done on a 'task' basis and that workers could leave after finishing their task. The following Statement 4.2 gives the details of hours of in the different centres—

## STATEMENT 4.2

*Daily Hours of Work in Tea Plantations—1961-62*

Centre	Number of estates	Percentage of estates where daily hours of work for majority of workers were for							
		Adults				Children			
		Less than 8 hours	Equal to 8 hours	More than 8 hours	Not fixed	Less than 8 hours	Equal to 8 hours	More than 8 hours	Not fixed
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	679	11.5	75.1	—	13.4	44.7	7.2	—	48.1*
2. West Bengal ..	273	22.4	73.1	4.5	—	69.6	21.5	—	8.9*
3. Southern India ..	213	42.8	54.1	—	3.1	72.7	22.7	4.6	—
4. Residual ..	35	—	87.6	12.4	—	100.0	—	—	—
5. All-India ..	1,235	19.9	70.8	1.3	8.0	54.9	12.3	6.4	32.4*

\*Information relating to hours of work for children was not available in respect of 1.4% of estates in Assam and Tripura, 5.3% in West Bengal, or 2.3% in the entire country.

The weekly hours of work prescribed in the Plantations Labour Act for adolescents and children were 40. The Survey results show that the hours of work for adolescents in majority of the units employing them were less than 40 per week and less than 8 per day. There were, however, instances in all the centres where adolescents were required to work for the same number of hours as adults.

As will be seen from Statements 4.1 and 4.2, the hours of work for children were not more than 40 a week and not more than 8 per day in majority of the units employing them in all the centres. In Assam and Tripura, in nearly 47 per cent of the estates the daily hours of work were not fixed, in the sense that work was purely done on a task basis and children were free to go after the work was over. Except for the estates in the Residual Group, everywhere a certain number of estates were found to be taking work for longer hours from children than prescribed under the law. The percentage of such estates was 7 in Assam and Tripura, 22 in West Bengal and 23 in Southern India, i.e., 12 in the country, as a whole.

\*About 1 per cent.

The Plantations Labour Act stipulates that the spread-over of hours of work including rest interval, for adults should not exceed 12 on any day. Data collected during the Survey show that this provision was being complied by all the estates covered. In fact, the spread-over of hours of work, including rest interval, for adults ranged from 8 to 9 in nearly 68 per cent. of the estates in the country as a whole; it was more than 9 but less than 12 in nearly 23 per cent., less than 8 hours in about 2 per cent and in the rest (7 per cent) the timings were not fixed. The following Statement 4.3 gives details of spread over of hours of work, duration of rest interval, etc., in the different centres—

## STATEMENT 4.3

*Distribution of Tea Plantations According to Duration of Spread-over, Rest Interval, etc.,—1961-62*

Centre	Number of estates	Percentage of estates where								
		Spread over for adult workers was				Rest interval for adult workers was				Timings were not being observed
		Less than 8 hours	8 to 9 hours	More than 9 hours but less than 12 hours	Not fixed	Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ hour	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hour	More than 1 hour	Not fixed	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1. Assam and Tripura	679	1.2	66.4	20.2	12.2	2.3	62.4	23.1	12.2	48.0
2. West Bengal	273	6.0	50.8	43.2	—	10.5	38.8	49.2	1.5*	64.1
3. Southern India	248	—	86.0	10.9	3.1	—	89.2	7.7	3.1	11.0
4. Residual	35	—	100.0	—	—	33.3	66.7	—	—	11.7
5. All India ..	1,235	2.0	67.8	22.9	7.3	4.5	62.6	25.2	7.7**	43.7

\*Information was not available about the duration of rest interval in these estates.

\*\*Includes 0.3 per cent of the estates where information relating to the duration of rest interval was not available.

It will be seen from the statistics given in Statement 4.3 that the duration of rest interval for adult workers was  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 hour in nearly 63 per cent. of the estates in the country, as a whole. As regards individual centres the position was that in a majority of the estates in all the centres, except West Bengal, the rest interval ranged from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 hour. In West Bengal, nearly 49 per cent of the estates allowed a rest interval of more than 1 hour, and about 39 per cent between  $\frac{1}{2}$  and one hour. Even though the Plantations Labour Act stipulates that there should be a rest interval of at least half an hour, yet the Survey results show that in nearly 4.5 per cent. of the estates in the country, as a whole, the duration of rest interval was less than half an hour. As would be seen from Statement 4.3 such a default was the greatest in the Residual Group.

Information collected during the Survey concerning observance of timings in the estates shows that timings, as notified by the managements, were not being observed in nearly 44 per cent of tea plantations in the

country as a whole. The percentage of estates where timings were not observed was the highest (64) in West Bengal, followed by Assam and Tripura (48), Residual Group (12) and Southern India (11). The main reason for such a high proportion of defaulters seems to be that work in plantations is generally done on a task basis and workers are allowed to go home when they finish their work. It was noticed that during the busy season, when plucking work was in full swing, the workers were tempted to stay on even after the closing time to earn more because of the incentives offered by the managements for extra leaf plucking. The non-observance of timings by the managements in general, relate to work during busy season.

#### 4.3. *Task system*

In the context of the discussion of daily hours of work, it may be mentioned that in tea plantations there is a task system. At the time of the enquiry of the Labour Investigation Committee there was no regulation of daily hours of work and therefore the length of the working day depended on the task assigned. At the time of the present Survey also, the task system prevailed in all the centres of plantations. However, the tasks were now being fixed generally by managements in consultation with workers or their unions. The tasks were so fixed that they could be completed within the hours specified under the Act. Any worker who completed his day's task was free to go home irrespective of the fact whether the working hours were over or not.

#### 4.4. *Conserancy*

In 1944-45, when the Labour Investigation Committee enquired into the conditions of labour in plantations, there were generally no conserancy arrangements in the fields where workers worked throughout the day. The Committee in their report\* strongly recommended that in view of the very high incidence of hookworm infection among plantation labour, it was in the interests of the planters themselves to provide proper latrines for their labour. Largely as a result of this recommendation a specific provision was incorporated in the Plantations Labour Act making it incumbent on the managements to provide sufficient number of latrines and urinals separately for male and female workers at places convenient and accessible to them. The Act also requires that the latrines and the urinals should be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. The State Governments were empowered to prescribe the scale and standard of latrines and urinals.

The rules framed by the Governments of Assam, West Bengal, Madras, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab require every plantation to provide latrines on the scale of one for every 50 acres of the area under cultivation or part thereof subject to a minimum of one latrine each for either sex. These rules also lay down that latrines, other than those connected with an efficient water borne sewage system, should comply with the requirements of Public Health authorities. As regards urinals, the rules framed by Assam, West Bengal, Madras and Punjab provide that they should be on the same scale as latrines. However, the U.P. rules lay down that each plantation should have one urinal for every 10 acres of the area under cultivation or part thereof. There is no mention about the urinals in the rules framed by the Government of Kerala.

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\*Report on an enquiry into conditions of Labour in plantations in India, by D.V. Rego I.C.S., p. 192.

The Survey results show that in the industry in the country, as a whole, only about 4 per cent. of the estates had provided latrines at work places for the use of their workers. The following Statement 4.4 gives details about the type of conservancy arrangements provided in the different centres—

STATEMENT 4.4  
*Conservancy Arrangements in Tea Plantations—1961-62*

Centre	No. of estates	Percentage of estates								
		Providing		Where the latrines were of				Providing water taps	Where latrines were properly screened	Employing women and having separate arrange- ments for them
		Latrines	Urinals	Water borne type		Dry type				
				Sewers	Septic tanks	Bore hole	Pan			
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1. Assam and										
4. Tripura ..	679	2.3	—	—	100.0	—	—	74.6	100.0	—
2. West Bengal	273	1.5	1.5	100.0	—	—	—	100.0	100.0	—
3. Southern										
India ..	248	14.2	4.7	—	66.5	33.5	—	88.8	100.0	1.6
4. Residual ..	35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5. All India ..	1,235	4.5	1.3	7.5	71.1	21.4	—	85.6	100.0	0.3

NOTE—Figures mentioned in columns (5) to (10) are percentages to units providing latrines, i.e. column (3).

It will be seen from the above Statement that the proportion of units providing latrines was 14 per cent. in Southern India and it was almost insignificant in Assam and Tripura as well as West Bengal. There were no conservancy arrangements at all in the Residual Group.

As regards the type of latrines, the position was that whereas in West Bengal, latrines were of water-borne sewer type, in Assam and Tripura they were of water-borne septic tank type. In Southern India, of the estates providing latrines, in nearly 66 per cent. they were of water-borne septic tank type and in the rest (34 per cent.) there were only 'bore hole' latrines.

Construction of latrines, wherever provided, were all of permanent nature in all the centres. Similarly, proper screening arrangements existed in all the latrines provided in the concerned units. Even though the law requires that separate latrines should be provided for women workers, this was not being followed by the managements. In fact, excepting one sampled estate in Southern India, none of the estates in this centre or in any other centre had provided separate conservancy arrangements for women even though the Survey results show that all the sampled units in the industry were employing women.

In the matter of providing urinals, the position was worse. The Survey results indicate that urinals were provided by a negligible percentage of the estates in the industry in the country as a whole. In fact only a

few large estates in West Bengal, and a few large as well as small estates in Southern India had provided urinals. The facility was totally absent in Assam and Tripura and the Residual Group.

The main reason for the non-provision of conservancy arrangements as per the Act seems to be the practical difficulties of managements. Some of the employers were of the view that latrines were required to be provided only in the lines, i.e., where workers' quarters were located. It was understood from discussion with the State officials by the Field Staff that provision of latrines is insisted upon only in 'lines'\* and not at work places. It was also understood from managements that the practical difficulties relating to the construction of latrines and urinals in the field were discussed at the meetings of the Plantations Advisory Boards/Committees and there appeared to be no objection to the proposal of having latrines only in the 'lines'.

#### 4.5. Leave and Holidays with Pay

When the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their enquiry in tea plantations, there were no paid holidays as a rule. The Committee reported that only a few estates gave a paid holiday on some festivals like *Fagua* or *Durga Puja* or Christmas (in Kerala only). With the enactment of the Plantations Labour Act, workers employed in plantations are now entitled to annual leave (earned leave) as well as sick leave with wages under certain conditions. As a result of certain Acts passed by some State Governments (e.g., Kerala) workers are also entitled to certain national and festival holidays with pay. Thus, at the time of the present Survey, the only type of leave for which there was no statutory provision was casual leave. Nevertheless, in a large number of estates such a leave was also being allowed with pay. The following Statement (4.5) gives details of the estates granting various types of leave in the different centres—

#### STATEMENT 4.5

*Percentage of Estates Granting Various Types of Leave with Pay—1961-62*

Centre	Number of estates	Estimated percentage of estates granting			
		Earned leave (Annual leave)	Casual leave	Sick leave	National and Festival holidays
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Assam and Tripura .. ..	679	98.9	86.3	96.6	98.9
2. West Bengal .. ..	273	100.0	26.9	85.1	97.0
3. Southern India .. ..	248	93.8	87.7	93.8	96.9
4. Residual .. ..	35	66.7	12.4	66.7	100.0
5. All India .. ..	1,235	97.2	71.3	92.6	98.1

##### 4.5.1. Earned Leave

The Plantations Labour Act stipulates that annual leave with wages shall be allowed at the rate of 1 day for every 20 days worked to each adult worker and at the rate of 1 day for every 15 days worked to young persons (i.e., adolescents and children). From the statistics given in Statement 4.5 it would be seen that nearly 97 per cent. of the estates in the country, as a whole, were granting earned leave to their employees. The

\*i.e. where workers' quarters were located.

percentage of such estates was the highest (100) in West Bengal, followed by Assam and Tripura (99), Southern India (94) and it was only 67 in the Residual Group. Almost all the large size units granted earned leave and the defaulters were mainly small size estates which did not have any regular labour force and were engaged only casual labour for short duration for getting the work done when necessary. The rate of payment for the leave period was as per the provisions of the Plantations Labour Act in case of workers other than members of staff\*.

Though most of the members of staff came within the definition of 'worker' under the Plantations Labour Act, they were governed by provisions relating to leave mentioned in the Standing Orders or mutual agreements between employers and unions. In Assam and Tripura, staff members were entitled to 15 days' annual leave with full basic pay and dearness allowance. In fact, in the matter of leave, staff members were entitled to annual leave only in accordance with the provision of Plantations Labour Act and only in stray cases leave for more than the number of days stipulated in the Act was given at the discretion of the management. In West Bengal, all staff members were generally allowed annual leave as per the provisions of the Act, but in some estates leave was granted at the rate of 30 days per year with full basic pay and dearness allowance to those employees who entered service prior to January, 1960. Such employees who entered service in January, 1960 or afterwards, were entitled to earned leave at the rate of 15 days per annum with full basic pay and dearness allowance. In Southern India, they were entitled to 30 days' leave in a year with full basic pay, dearness allowance, etc., after completing 11 months of service in the estate. In the Residual Group, staff members were granted leave as per the provisions of the Plantations Labour Act.

In order to have an idea about the extent of the benefit enjoyed by workers, data relating to number of workers who availed of leave during the calendar year preceding the period of the Survey were collected and the results are presented in Statement 4.6—

#### STATEMENT 4.6

##### *Distribution of Workers Granted Earned Leave according to Number of Days enjoyed during 1961*

Centre	Estimated number of workers who enjoyed leave during 1961	Distribution of workers who enjoyed leave by period of leave (estimated percentage)						
		Up to 5 days	Over 5 but up to 10 days	Over 10 but up to 15 days	Over 15 but up to 20 days	Over 20 but up to 25 days	Over 25 but up to 30 days	Over 30 days
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1. Assam and Tripura	4,97,554	9.1	24.6	63.4	2.5	0.2	0.1	0.1
2. West Bengal	2,04,629	4.1	21.5	67.8	5.9	0.2	0.4	0.1
3. Southern India	1,34,442	5.7	15.8	68.9	6.1	1.6	1.7	0.2
4. Residual	1,806	12.4	16.0	38.8	20.6	10.1	1.7	0.4
5. All India	6,38,391	7.3	22.4	65.3	3.9	0.5	0.4	0.1

\* For definition of staff, see p. 20 of chapter II.

The above statistics reveal that nearly 88 per cent. of the workers enjoyed leave ranging from 6 to 15 days, the largest concentration being in the group 'Over 10 but up to 15 days' which accounted for nearly 65 per cent. of the workers enjoying leave. There was practically no variation as between the important centres of concentration in this regard, except for the Residual group, where the percentage was about 55. Workers who enjoyed leave for over 15 days were mainly staff members, who, as already stated earlier, were entitled to better leave facilities in most of the centres.

#### 4.5.2. *Sick Leave*

The rules framed by the State Governments under the Plantations Labour Act, provide for the grant of sick leave with wages to the extent of 14 days in a year with pay, which is to be two-thirds of the daily wages in the case of time-rated or the average daily earnings in the cases of piece-rated workers, subject to a maximum of As. 12 (Re. 0.75) per day.\* The condition prescribed for the grant of sick leave with wages in all the centres is that sickness should be certified by the Certifying Surgeon appointed by the estate. The Survey results show that nearly 93 per cent. of the tea plantations in the country, as a whole, were complying with the provision relating to grant of sick leave. The proportion of estates granting sick leave was the highest (97 per cent.) in Assam and Tripura, followed by Southern India (94 per cent.) and West Bengal (85 per cent.). In the Residual Group, only about 67 per cent. had the system of granting sick leave. The defaulters were mainly small estates not having any regular labour force, and many of their employees did not know their own rights with regard to sick leave.

As in the case of earned leave, staff members enjoyed better facilities in the matter of sick leave. In Assam and Tripura, West Bengal, and the Residual Group, they were allowed 15 days' sick leave in a year with full basic pay, dearness allowance, etc. In Southern India, they were allowed one month's leave with full basic pay, dearness allowance, etc.

#### 4.5.3. *Casual Leave*

The findings of the Survey reveal that the practice of granting casual leave was in vogue in about 71 per cent. of the tea plantations in the country, as a whole. The system was widely prevalent in Assam and Tripura (86 per cent.) and Southern India (88 per cent.) but the proportion of estates granting casual leave was only 27 per cent. in West Bengal and it was very low (12 per cent.) in the Residual Group. Since there is no legal provision for the grant of casual leave, wherever such a facility was being given, it was solely at the discretion of the managements and only staff members were entitled to it. The number of days allowed differed from centre to centre, but generally, it was 10 days in Assam and Tripura and West Bengal, 7 days in Southern India and 8 days in the Residual Group. For such leave, payment was being made at the rate of full basic pay and dearness allowance, etc.

#### 4.5.4. *National and Festival Holidays*

Excepting Kerala and Madras, where there are special State Acts for the grant of national and festival holidays with pay to industrial workers, including plantation workers, there is no law in any other State on the subject of paid national and festival holidays. Yet, it was found that the

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\*Under Assam Rules sick leave is to be granted with full salary.



practice of granting such holidays was in vogue in almost 98 per cent. of the estates in the country, as a whole. All the units surveyed in the Residual Group were found to be granting such holidays. In other centres, the percentage of estates granting these holidays was 99 in Assam and Tripura and 97 in West Bengal as well as Southern India. The number of days allowed as holidays in a year ranged from 5 to 15 in Assam and Tripura, 6 to 15 in West Bengal, 5 to 7 in Southern India and 5 to 15 in the Residual Group. Generally, one holiday each was allowed on the Independence Day and the Republic Day and the rest of the holidays were allowed on festival days according to mutual agreements between employers and workers. The qualifying condition generally laid down for the entitlement of wages on the holidays was that the worker should be present on the days preceding and succeeding the holidays. Workers were being paid the usual minimum wage (i.e. basic and dearness allowance) or consolidated wages for holidays but staff members were entitled to full basic pay and dearness allowance, etc.

#### 4.5.5. *Weekly off, etc.*

The system of allowing workers a day of rest in a week was prevalent in almost\* all the tea plantations in the country. Since the law does not specifically provide for payment for such off days, workers in the industry, excepting those who were monthly-rated (i.e., staff), did not get any pay for such off days. A very insignificant number of estates in West Bengal and Southern India granted some other type of leave.

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\*The default was noticed only in one sampled estate each in West Bengal and Southern India. These were very small estates.

## CHAPTER V

### WELFARE AND AMENITIES

Welfare activities undertaken by the employers and various amenities provided to workers in plantations are generally those which the employers are under a statutory obligation to provide under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 and the rules framed thereunder by the various State Governments. Data collected during the Survey on the various welfare items are discussed in the following paragraphs:—

#### 5.1. *Drinking Water*

The law requires every plantation to make effective arrangements for providing and maintaining at convenient places in the plantation a sufficient supply of wholesome drinking water for all workers. The rules framed by the State Governments cover such matters as the sources of supply of water, storage arrangements, cleanliness, etc. These rules, except the one framed by the Government of Kerala, also stipulate that drinking water facilities should be made available at work-sites at all times during working hours. The Kerala rules do not mention about facilities to be provided at work-sites but lay down that drinking water facilities should be provided 'at convenient places' in the plantation. The Survey results show that drinking water facilities at work-sites existed in nearly 83 per cent. of the tea plantations in the country, as a whole. As for individual centres of concentration, it was found that all the estates surveyed in the Residual Group had complied with the law; nearly 98 per cent. of the estates in Assam and Tripura, 82 per cent. in West Bengal had also complied, with the legal provision, but the percentage of estates in Southern India having drinking water facilities at work sites was only 44. Defaulters were mostly small estates in the case of Assam and Tripura, West Bengal. The main reasons adduced by the defaulting managements for not providing drinking water facilities were that there were natural springs or ponds in the estate areas and workers could use them. In Southern India, large as well as small estates were among the defaulters. Probably the default in estates in Kerala was due to the fact that the State Plantations Rules had not made any specific provision about drinking water facilities to be provided at work sites. In Madras also, even though the State rules require plantations to make arrangements for drinking water facilities at work-sites, several estates had not complied with this provision. Most of the managements in this centre appeared to be under the impression that drinking water facilities were required to be provided near workers' lines only. This perhaps is the main reason for a low percentage of estates providing drinking water facilities at work-sites.

As regards the types of arrangements for the supply of drinking water, the most common practice was to provide water in buckets and/or drums, and/or in earthen pitchers. The percentage of estates providing drinking water in buckets, drums and/or in the earthen pitchers was about 60 in the industry in the country as a whole. The details are given in Statement 5.1.

## STATEMENT 5.1

*Drinking Water Facilities in Tea Plantations—1961-62*

Centre	Number of estates	Percent- age of estates where drink- ing water facilities existed at work sites	Percentage of estates where water supply arrangement was found to be						Percent- age of estates having arran- gements for cool water in summer	
			Refrigerated water/coolers	Earthen pitchers only	Buckets or drums or tins	Earthen and buckets or drums or tins	Tube wells or hand pumps	Only taps		Others (supply of liquid tea in place of water and water supply through <i>Pani walas</i> )
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	679	97.7	—	—	30.2	42.0	6.5	1.8	19.5	0.6
2. West Bengal ..	273	82.1	—	1.8	27.3	18.2	14.5	12.7	25.5	6.0
3. Southern India ..	248	43.6	—	—	—	7.1	32.1	60.8	—	—
4. Residual ..	35	100.0	—	33.3	33.3	12.4	21.0	—	—	66.7
5. All-India ..	1,235	83.5	—	1.5	26.5	32.2	11.4	10.3	18.1	3.5

It is evident from the statistics given in Statement 5.1 that predominant arrangement for the supply of drinking water facilities was in the form of buckets, drums, tins and/or earthen pitchers in all the centres, except Southern India where the predominant arrangement was 'taps'. The system of supplying liquid tea in place of water and supply of water through *pani walas* to workers was in vogue only in Assam and Tripura and West Bengal, the percentage of estates having such arrangements being 19.5 in Assam and Tripura and 25.5 in West Bengal or 18 per cent. in the industry in the country, as a whole. Even though there is no legal obligation on employers to make arrangements for the supply of cool water in summer months, yet a few estates in Assam and Tripura and West Bengal and nearly two-thirds of the estates in the Residual Group had made arrangements for the supply of cool water in earthen pitchers for the use of workers.

### 5.2. Washing Facilities

Though the law does not require planters to provide washing facilities to workers, the Survey results show that nearly 5 per cent. of tea estates in the country as a whole, had made some arrangements for washing facilities. Such arrangements were found in a few estates in Assam and Tripura (7 per cent.) and West Bengal (6 per cent.) only. In all these estates taps on stand pipes were provided for the purpose.

### 5.3. Canteens

The rules framed under the Plantations Labour Act by the State Governments require every plantation wherein 150 or more workers are ordinarily employed to provide and maintain canteen or canteens with

facilities for sale of tea, coffee (only in Southern India) and snacks to workers on a no-profit no-loss basis. The rules also require that prices to be charged should be conspicuously displayed in every canteen. On the basis of statistics collected during the Survey, it is estimated that in the industry, in the country, as a whole, nearly 83 per cent. of tea plantations were employing 150 or more workers and consequently were under a statutory obligation to provide canteens in their estates. Of these, only about 16 per cent. had some such arrangements. The percentage of estates under legal obligation and having such arrangements was 50 in the Residual Group, 34 in Southern India, 14 in Assam and Tripura and only 5 in West Bengal. Nowhere any estates had provided canteen facilities voluntarily. It was found that the usual practice adopted by managements in all the centres was to encourage opening of tea shops by private contractors or other individuals in the estate areas to serve the purpose of canteens. The managements had generally nothing to do with the administration of these 'canteens' run by such persons. The following Statements (5.2 and 5.3) give details of canteen facilities, the agency for running them, etc., in the different centres—

It will be seen from Statement 5.3 that the predominant agency for running the canteens was 'contractors' in all centres, except West Bengal where the system of running the canteens jointly by managements and workers was quite popular. Managements themselves were found to be running the canteens only in a few units in Assam and Tripura and Southern India. Similarly, only in very few estates (5 per cent.) in Assam and Tripura workers themselves were running the canteens. In Southern India, some of the managements permitted private individuals to run tea shops in the estate area but exercised no control over the items sold or their sale price, etc.

The items sold in the canteens in the various centres were generally tea, coffee (only in Southern India) and snacks, but meals were also being supplied in two-thirds of canteens in West Bengal and 41 per cent. in Southern India. As regards the rates at which the items were sold, even though the law requires that articles should be sold on a no-profit no-loss basis, yet the position varied as between the different centres. Whereas in all the estates which had canteens in the Residual Group, items were sold at market rates only, in West Bengal, items were sold at subsidised rates. In Assam and Tripura, in nearly 35 per cent. of the estates having canteens, items were sold at subsidised rates, in 25 per cent. on a no-profit no-loss basis and in the rest (40 per cent.) at market rates only. Similarly, in Southern India, in about 23 per cent. of the estates having canteens, items were sold at subsidised rates, in 6 per cent. on a no-profit no-loss basis and in the rest (71 per cent.) at market rates only.

There is no statutory provision for constituting canteen managing committees. Nevertheless it was found that such committees existed in nearly 29 per cent. of the estates having canteen facilities. These committees, which existed only in some estates in Assam and Tripura, West Bengal and Southern India, fixed the prices of the items to be sold. In the other cases, the prices were generally fixed by those who were running the canteens, i.e., contractors or private individuals.

## STATEMENT 5.2

*Proportion of Tea Plantations having Canteen Facilities—1961-62*

Centre			Number of estates	Estimated percentage of estates			
				Employing 150 or more workers	Employing 150 workers or more and having canteens	Employing less than 150 workers but having canteens	Having canteens whether under obligation or not*
(1)			(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Assam and Tripura	..	..	679	84.0	14.0	—	11.8
2. West Bengal	..	..	273	94.1	4.8	—	4.5
3. Southern India	..	..	248	78.4	34.2	—	26.8
4. Residual	..	..	35	24.7	50.0	—	12.4
5. All India	..	..	1,225	83.4	15.8	—	13.2

\*Percentage relates to all estates, whether under legal obligation or not.

## STATEMENT 5.3

*Agency for Running and Articles Sold in Canteens*

Centre	*Percentage of estates where the canteens were run by					Percentage* of estates where the items sold in the canteens were		Percentage of estates where the articles sold in the canteens were at		
	Managements	Contractors	Jointly by managements and workers	Workers	Private individuals	Tea, Coffee and snacks	Meals also	Subsidised rates	No profit no. loss basis	Market rate
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1. Assam and Tripura	5.0	80.3	9.7	5.0	—	100.0	—	35.1	24.8	40.1
2. West Bengal	—	33.6	66.4	—	—	33.6	66.4	100.0	—	—
3. Southern India	23.4	41.4	5.9	—	29.3	58.9	41.1	23.4	5.9	70.7
4. Residual	—	100.0	—	—	—	100.0	—	—	—	100.0
5. All-India	12.0	61.4	12.2	2.5	11.9	78.2	21.8	34.2	14.6	51.2

\* Relates to estates having canteens.

Prices were found to have been displayed only in about 27 per cent. of the estates having canteens in the country as a whole. In fact none of the estates in the Residual Group, which had canteens, had displayed price lists in the canteens. The percentage of estates which had canteens and which had displayed prices of the items sold in the canteens, was 66 in West Bengal, 40 in Assam and Tripura and only 6 in Southern India.

Drinking water facilities were provided in nearly 80 per cent. of the estates having canteens in the country as a whole. In fact, excepting for canteens in the estates in the Residual Group, everywhere else this facility existed in a majority of the canteens.

#### 5.4. Creches

The Labour Investigation Committee had found that creches were almost rare in the estates in North India, but in South India most of the tea gardens had some provision or the other for the care of children of working mothers. In view of the high proportion of women in the industry the Committee recommended that provision of creche should be made compulsory for the estates. As a result of this recommendation, a specific provision on the subject was incorporated in the Plantations Labour Act, 1951. Under the Act, it is obligatory for all plantations, including tea, which employ 50 or more women to provide and maintain suitable rooms for the use of children, below the age of six, of women workers. The rules framed by the State Governments under the Act prescribe the standards of creches and provide that children attending creches should be supplied milk, refreshments, clothes, soap, oil, etc. The data collected during the Survey in respect of creches are given in the following Statement 5.4—

STATEMENT 5.4  
*Creche Facilities in Tea Plantations in 1961-62*

Centre	Number of estates	Percent- age of estates employing women	Percentage of estates			
			Under statutory obligation		Not under statutory obligation but providing creches	Employing women and providing in creches whether under obligation or not
			to provide creches	and providing creches		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	679	100.0	93.2	64.9	—	69.4
2. West Bengal ..	278	100.0	97.0	80.1	—	77.7
3. Southern India ..	248	100.0	84.6	96.4	6.2	87.7
4. Residual ..	35	109.0	58.1	21.3	20.9	33.3
5. All India ..	1,235	100.0	91.3	73.5	4.8	68.9

It is estimated that in the industry in the country, as a whole, nearly 91 per cent. of the tea plantations were under a statutory obligation to provide creche facilities; of these, only about 74 per cent. had actually done so. In addition, nearly 2 per cent. of the estates, which were under no legal obligation to provide creche, had also provided such facilities. Thus, in the industry as a whole, nearly 69 per cent. of the total number of estates employing women had provided creche facilities irrespective of whether they were under obligation or not. Taking the estates which were under a statutory obligation to provide creche facilities, it would appear that compliance of the law with regard to providing creche facilities was only partial in all the centres. Defaulting estates accounted for nearly 35

per cent. in Assam and Tripura, 20 per cent. in West Bengal and only 4 per cent. in Southern India. The highest proportion of defaulters, *viz.*, 79 per cent. was in the Residual Group. The main reasons given by the defaulting employers in Assam and Tripura as well as West Bengal were: (1) that women workers did not require any creche facilities, (2) that there were few permanent workers and hence this facility was not required to be given, or (3) that creches were under construction. In the Residual Group, the estates in Punjab reported that they had been exempted by the State Government from the provision of the rules relating to creches and hence this facility was not provided.

Even though the rules framed under the Act prescribe the standard of creche buildings, etc., yet from such general information as was collected during the Survey it would appear that the standard prescribed by the law was not being followed fully in any of the centres. In fact, in some of the centres, *e.g.*, West Bengal, there were only 'mobile creches' in the form of tents. In some cases, there were only some temporary sheds which were being used as creches. Furniture was almost absent in most of the creches. It was found that in many cases no proper lighting and ventilation facilities existed in the creches. Adequate number of cradles was rarely provided in any of the creches in the different centres.

As regards staff, excepting in stray cases, only untrained *ayahs*, that too from among the women workers of the estates, were required to attend to the creches by turn.

As already stated earlier, the rules framed by the State Governments under the Plantations Labour Act, require employers to supply clean clothes, soap, oil, milk, refreshments, etc., to children attending the creches. Information collected during the Survey concerning the items supplied to children is given in the following Statement—

#### STATEMENT 5.5

*Distribution of Tea Plantations having Creche Facilities according to Items Supplied to Children—1961-62*

Centre	Number of estates	Percentage of estates providing creche facilities	Percentage of estates supplying					
			Toys	Clean clothes <sup>†</sup>	Oil	Soap	Towels	Milk and/or refreshments
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	679	60.4	20.2	4.8	—	7.7	6.7	33.7
2. West Bengal	273	77.7	21.1	7.7	1.9	17.3	17.3	61.5
3. Southern India	248	87.7	3.6	12.7	—	18.0	7.2	53.8
4. Residual ..	35	33.3	100.0	—	—	—	37.1	37.1
5. All-India ..	1,235	68.9	17.3	7.5	0.5	12.6	9.9	45.8

<sup>†</sup>Relates to estates which were providing creche facilities irrespective of whether they were under legal obligation or not.

Even though creches were provided in a good majority of tea plantations, the statistics given in Statement 5.5 show that compliance of the rules relating to items to be supplied was only partial in all the centres. The only items of supply which was significant was the supply of milk and/or refreshments to children but even this was done only in about 46 per cent. of the estates providing creche facilities in the country, as a whole.

### 5.5. Medical Facilities

In 1944-45, when the Labour Investigation Committee conducted an enquiry in plantations, the planters were under no obligation to provide medical facilities. All the same, the Committee reported that free medical aid was given to workers and their dependents in all plantations. The type of facilities varied widely from centre to centre. Since then elaborate statutory provision has been made for ensuring proper medical aid to plantation workers. The rules framed under the Plantations Labour Act by the various State Governments require every plantation employing 1,000 or more workers to have, wherever, possible, its own Garden Hospital or to have a lien on beds in such hospitals in the neighbouring plantation or other hospital to the scale of 15 beds per 1,000 workers as may be approved by the Chief Inspector of Plantations. Those which choose the second alternative have the option to provide a dispensary with up to 5 detention beds under the supervision of a qualified doctor assisted by such staff as may be prescribed by the Chief Inspector. If such a dispensary is maintained, the management can reduce proportionately the number of beds on which they may have a lien. Those plantations which employ less than 1,000 workers and are situated within a reasonable distance from one another have the option to combine and provide joint hospitals/dispensaries and share their expenses. However, they have to submit full particulars of the type of arrangements they propose to make to the Chief Inspector of Plantations and obtain his approval. The rules lay down that those estates which employ more than 200 workers and provide combined hospitals, should wherever possible, run their own dispensary. In every estate where a garden hospital, dispensary or a combined garden hospital or dispensary is not situated, the management is required to maintain a cup board or first-aid box equipped with the prescribed contents. Each cup-board or first-aid box is to be kept under the charge of a trained first-aider. The rules further provide that those small and inaccessible plantations which employ 350 or less workers must have a dispensary, with detention beds of the prescribed number under the immediate care of a full-time qualified compounder but supervised and visited periodically at regular hours by the nearest garden doctor.

Rules also prescribe, *inter alia*, the qualifications of doctors, nurses, etc., the number of medical and auxiliary personnel to be appointed, number of beds, equipments, etc., to be provided in the Group as well as Garden Hospitals and periodical visits by the District Medical Officers to such hospitals.

The findings of the Survey reveal that medical facilities in one form or the other were provided by the managements of almost 98 per cent. of the tea estates in the country as a whole. Those which had not provided any facility at all (2 per cent.) were small estates all located either in Assam and Tripura or Southern India. Statement 5.6 gives details regarding the type of facilities provided in the different centres.



## STATEMENT 5.6

*Distribution of Tea Plantations according to Type of Medical Facilities Provided—1961-62*

Centre	Number of Estates	Percentage of estates providing medical facilities in the form of					
		Hospitals	Dispensaries	Hospitals as well as Dispensaries	Hospitals as well as first-aid boxes	Dispensary as well as first-aid boxes	Dispensary as well as contract with nearby hospital/doctor
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	679	26.7	20.0	14.7	1.8	1.1	10.3
2. West Bengal	273	25.4	28.3	37.4	..	..	5.9
3. Southern India ..	248	18.8	7.8	25.2	1.6	..	18.7
4. Residual ..	35	12.4	66.7	..	..	—	—
5. All-India ..	1,235	24.4	2.07	21.3	1.3	0.6	10.7

Centre	Percentage of estates providing medical facilities in the form of						
	Dispensary first-aid boxes as well as contract with nearby hospital	First-aid boxes and contract with nearby hospital/doctor	Only contract with nearby hospital/doctor	Hospital and contract with nearby doctor/ hospital and first-aid box	Hospital as well as contract with nearby hospital/doctor	Hospital/ dispensary as well as contract with nearby hospital	No facility at all
(1)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	—	—	3.4	2.3	4.6	12.3	2.3
2. West Bengal	—	—	3.0	—	—	—	—
3. Southern India ..	—	12.3	6.2	—	3.2	3.1	3.1
4. Residual ..	—	—	20.9	—	—	—	—
5. All India ..	—	2.5	4.4	1.3	2.2	7.7	1.8

It is evident from the statistics given in Statement 5.6 that the predominant types of medical arrangements in the tea plantations were in the form of hospitals and/or dispensaries. Such facilities existed in nearly two-thirds of the estates in the country as a whole. In addition, in about 25 per cent. of the estates, there were hospitals and/or dispensaries as well as other facilities such as first-aid boxes and contract with nearby Group or Garden Hospitals/Doctors. Thus, in the industry as a whole, nearly 91 per cent. of the estates had hospitals and/or dispensaries apart from other facilities mentioned above. The percentage of units which did not have hospital/dispensary facilities but had only a contract with nearby hospitals, dispensaries or doctors and/or having only first-aid boxes was only 7 in the industry in the country as a whole. As regards the individual centres of concentration, the position was that whereas in Assam and Tripura and West Bengal, the percentage of estates providing hospitals and/or dispensaries with or without such other facilities as first-aid boxes and contract with the nearby Group or Garden Hospitals/Doctors was 94 and 97 respectively, in Southern India, and the Residual Group it was only 78 and 79 respectively.

As regards the medical staff appointed in the hospitals or dispensaries, the following Statement 5.7 gives the details for the different centres—

#### STATEMENT 5.7

#### *Medical Staff Appointed in the Hospitals or Dispensaries in Tea Plantations—1961-62*

Centre	Number of estates	Percentage of estates having hospitals and/or dispensaries	Percentage* of estates where the staff appointed in the hospitals or dispensaries was						
			Full-time doctors only	Part-time doctors only	Full-time as well as part-time doctors	Full-time doctors and other staff†	Part-time doctors and other staff	Full-time doctors, part-time doctors as well as other staff	Other† only
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
1. Assam and Tripura	679	94.3	2.4	2.4	—	38.8	13.3	35.8	7.3
2. West Bengal ..	273	97.0	—	—	—	41.5	7.7	47.8	3.0
3. Southern India ..	248	78.4	3.9	3.9	—	68.1	6.1	6.0	12.0
4. Residual ..	35	79.1	15.6	15.6	—	15.7	53.1	—	—
5. All-India ..	1,235	91.3	2.4	2.4	—	43.9	11.7	32.6	7.0

\*Percentages in col. (4) to (10) relate to units mentioned in col. (3).

†Relates to Nurses, Midwives, Compounder, and other allied staff.

Information regarding the first-aid boxes and personnel under whom they were kept, etc., collected during the Survey shows that first-aid boxes were equipped with the prescribed contents in nearly 70 per cent. of the estates maintaining them in the country, as a whole. The percentage of estates where the first-aid boxes were complete was 78 in Assam and Tripura and 64 in Southern India, there being no first-aid boxes in West Bengal and the Residual Group. The percentage of estates in Assam and Tripura and in Southern India where first-aid boxes were kept and placed under the charge of trained persons was 56 and 100 respectively. In

nearly 37 per cent. of the estates in the entire industry trained persons had received instruction under the St. John's Ambulance Scheme, 31 per cent. under the Red Cross Scheme and the rest (32 per cent.) had been trained by the hospital authorities of the concerned estate.

It may be mentioned in this connection that some of the State Governments (e.g., Assam) have constituted Medical Advisory Boards, consisting of representatives of the Government, employers and workers to advise the State Government on implementation of the provisions of the law relating to medical facilities. In States where there are no such separate Boards, the Plantations Labour Committees/Advisory Boards, which are also of a tripartite character, discuss the issues relating to medical facilities and help in the implementation of the law.

### 5.6. Recreation Facilities

The Labour Investigation Committee had reported that except for stray estates, which occasionally organised some sports or cinema shows generally nothing was being done for the recreation of workers in the industry. Since then, in recognition of a somewhat peculiar nature of conditions of life and employment of persons engaged on plantations, the Plantations Labour Act has made it obligatory for employers to provide recreation facilities and has authorised State Governments to prescribe the standard of such facilities. The rules framed by the various State Government prescribe more or less the same standards of recreation facilities. They lay down that every employer should provide and maintain, as near workers' quarters as possible, (i) recreation centres with provision\* for indoor games suitable for adult and child workers, and (ii) where adequate flat open space is available within a reasonable distance, a playground or playgrounds for adult and child workers with necessary sports equipment for outdoor games. The rules also permit the employers to have joint recreation centres and playgrounds, with the approval of the Chief Inspector of Plantations, and share their expenses.

The Survey shows that recreation facilities in one form or the other existed in nearly 87 per cent. of the tea plantations in the country, as a whole. The following Statement 5.8 gives the details of the facilities in the different centres—

STATEMENT 5.8  
*Recreation Facilities in Tea Plantations—1961-62*

Centre	Number of estates	Percentage of estates providing recreation facilities	Percentage† distribution of estates according to type of recreation facilities						
			Indoor games only	Outdoor games only	Indoor as well as outdoor games	Indoor, outdoor games as well as cultural programmes	Outdoor games and cultural programmes	Only programme on festivals	Indoor games and cultural programmes
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
1. Assam and Tripura	679	90.9	..	2.5	—	65.1	26.1	3.8	2.5
2. West Bengal ..	243	91.1	—	9.8	5.0	55.7	27.9	—	1.6
3. Southern India ..	248	79.9	7.8	2.0	19.5	55.1	4.0	18.6	—
4. Residual ..	35	45.7	—	45.8	—	—	27.1	27.1	—
5. All-India ..	1,235	87.4	1.4	4.7	4.7	60.2	4.*	4.†	1.8

\*The rules framed by Government of Assam require a provision of radio set also in addition to indoor games.

†Percentages relate to col. 3.

It will be seen from the above figures that the predominant type of recreation facilities were indoor games, and outdoor games as well as some cultural programmes in nearly 60 per cent of the estates in the country, as a whole. The position was more or less the same in the individual centres of concentration but in the estates in the Residual Group among games only outdoor games were being provided. It was found by the field staff that generally indoor games were being utilised by only staff members, and ordinary workers took interest in outdoor games like football, volley ball and the cultural programmes arranged on festive occasions. In fact, in Southern India, ordinary workers hardly played indoor or outdoor games. In most of the estates in this centre, there were 'staff clubs' which were confined to members of staff who paid some monthly subscription.

In nearly 76 per cent. of the estates having recreation facilities the expenses were entirely met by the managements, in about 17 per cent. jointly by employers and managements, and in the rest, the expenses were met either by workers only or from the welfare funds of the estates, wherever such funds existed. The position in individual centres was also more or less the same. It is estimated that expenses were met entirely by managements in 88 per cent. of estates in West Bengal, 84 in Southern India, 73 in the Residual Group and 69 in Assam and Tripura. The percentage of estates, where the expenses were met jointly by managements and employees, was 27 in Assam and Tripura, 6 in Southern India and 2 in West Bengal. Such a system did not exist in the Residual Centre.

Recreation facilities were generally administered directly by the managements in all the centres. There were, however, instances, mostly in big estates or group of estates, where there were specific committees consisting of representatives of workers, staff members and managements, for such a purpose, usually headed by the managers of the estates.

### 5.7. Educational Facilities

The mere fact that plantations are generally located in remote areas, out off from civic centres, increases the need for adequate arrangements for educational facilities. The Labour Investigation Committee, which conducted detailed investigation in 1944-45, reported that the position about education of children in plantations was very disquieting. They observed that if the standard of living of the plantation workers is to be raised, their children will have to be given education in its broadest sense and accustomed to better things.\* With the enactment of the Plantations Labour Act, 1951, it is now obligatory on all plantations, where workers' children between the ages of six and twelve exceed twenty-five, to make arrangements for the education of children free of charge. The rules framed by the State Governments exempt plantations from providing a primary school if there is a school run by the State Government or by a local body for imparting free education within a distance of 1 mile†. The rules have also prescribed standards of educational facilities, number of teachers to be appointed, their qualifications, etc.

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\*Report On An Enquiry Into Conditions of Labour in Plantations in India, by D.V.Rege, I.C.S., p. 193.

†The distance is 2 miles in the case of rules framed by Government of Kerala.

Data collected during the course of the Survey show that educational facilities were provided in nearly 66 per cent. of the tea plantations in the country, as a whole, in the rest (34 per cent.) there were no schools provided by the managements. The percentage of estates providing schools was the highest (75) in Assam and Tripura, followed by West Bengal (61) and Southern India (58). Educational facilities were totally absent in the units surveyed in the Residual Group. In all the estates providing educational facilities only primary schools existed. No fee was charged in any of these schools. The practice of supplying certain articles (e.g., slates, books), free to the children was in vogue only in about 27 per cent of estates having schools in Southern India, 15 in West Bengal and 6 in Assam and Tripura, or in about 12 per cent. of estates in the country as a whole.

It is estimated that nearly 7 per cent. of the tea plantations were giving regular or occasional subsidy to other schools where children of their workers were receiving education. The percentage of units paying such a subsidy was 19 in West Bengal, 5 in Southern India and 3 in Assam and Tripura.

### 5.8. *Adult Education Centres*

Information on adult education centres collected during the Survey shows that in the industry in the country, as a whole, adult education centres existed in nearly 5 per cent. of the tea plantations, i.e., comprising 10 per cent. of estates in West Bengal, 9 in Southern India and only one in Assam and Tripura. There was no such centre in the units surveyed in the Residual Group. Adult education centres were run within the estate area in all such units in Assam and Tripura and Southern India, but in West Bengal, majority of the adult education centres were outside the estate premises.

### 5.9. *Other Amenities*

#### 5.9.1. *Grain shops*

The Report of the Labour Investigation Committee does not make any mention about the existence of grain shops, however, it does say that the system of supplying food grains at concessional rates was in vogue in almost all the centres in 1944-45. Information collected during the present Survey shows that grain shops were run by the managements of nearly two-thirds of the tea plantations in the industry, in the country, as a whole. The percentage of estates having grain shops was the highest (97) in West Bengal, followed by Assam and Tripura (74), Southern India (16) and the Residual Group (12). Food grains were sold at subsidised rates in all the units having grain shops in West Bengal, and in 97 per cent. of the units in Assam and Tripura. In nearly 80 per cent. of the units having grain shop facilities in Southern India, items were sold at cost price and in the rest (20 per cent.) at market price only. In all the concerned estates in the Residual Group items were being sold at cost price. Thus, the position in the industry in the country as a whole was that articles were sold at subsidised rates in nearly 93 per cent. of the estates having grain shop facilities and in the rest they were either sold at cost price or at market price.

### 5.9.2. Co-operative Stores/Credit Societies

The co-operative movement does not seem to have made any headway in tea plantations. The Survey results show that co-operative credit societies existed only in an insignificant proportion of estates in the industry in the country as a whole. In fact, such societies existed only in 1.5 per cent. of the estates in West Bengal and 12 per cent. of the estates in the Residual Group, there being no such societies in other centres. These societies extended loans on easy terms to their members.

As regards co-operative stores, the results show that the percentage of estates having them was significant only in Southern India. The percentage of such estates there was nearly 17. In West Bengal and Assam and Tripura only one sampled estate each had such a store and thus they constituted an insignificant proportion of the total estates in these centres. The overall percentage of estates having co-operative stores was about 4. The co-operative stores sold provisions and/or cloth at market rates. In Southern India, co-operative stores available in the sampled units were actually branches, of a state-wide co-operative organisation and the facilities were available to members of public also.

No financial aid was given by the managements of the concerned units where the societies/stores were functioning.

### 5.9.3. Protective Articles\*

With a view to protecting workers, who have to work in open air, against weather the Plantations Labour Act authorises the State Governments to make rules requiring employers to provide workers with such number and type of umbrellas, blankets, rain coats or hats or other similar articles as may be considered appropriate. The rules framed by the State Governments of Assam and West Bengal do not specify the items. However, the Kerala rules require planters to supply once in a year a *cumbli* (blanket) or an umbrella or a rain coat or a hat of the type as may be approved by the Chief Inspector of Plantations. Those estates which are situated at a height of 2,500 feet or more are required to supply an extra blanket. The rules framed by the Government of Madras also do not specify the items, but it was learnt that the authorities generally insisted upon the supply of a *cumbli* to workers.

The Survey shows that the practice of supplying protective equipments to workers was in vogue only in nearly 39 per cent. of the tea plantations in the country as a whole. The percentage of units providing this facility was the highest (97) in Southern India, followed by the Residual Group (79), West Bengal (28) and it was the least (21) in Assam and Tripura.

In Assam and Tripura, workers were given '*Jhapias*' (bamboo made hats) and aprons once in a year or so. In West Bengal, the practice was to supply one straw head-gear (*ghoon*) to workers once in a year. In the Residual Group, some of the estates gave one blanket once in 2 years and some supplied umbrellas and used gunny bags only. The system which was prevalent in Southern India was to supply a *cumbli* (blanket) once in a year. In Kerala, managements were not supplying blankets but were making a cash payment in lieu, usually at the rate of Rs. 9.50 per worker

\*i.e., less than one per cent.

per annum, on the basis of mutual agreements between workers and employers and with the approval of the authorities. The facilities given in Southern India were generally restricted to permanent workers only. In Kerala, however, casual or temporary workers were being paid cash allowance at the rate of Re. 0.03 per day worked by them.

### 5.10. *Housing*

Due to the fact that plantations are generally located in remote areas and since most of the workers employed therein were, and to a certain extent, are still being, brought from distant places, arrangements made for housing of plantation workers has always invited special attention. The Labour Investigation Committee had found that planters were providing free houses to all their employees except casual and local labour. However, in the absence of any law regulating the housing conditions of plantation workers, the type of houses provided were found to vary from district to district and even from estate to estate. Since then elaborate regulations have now been framed on the subject and the plantations Labour Act makes it obligatory on every employer to provide and maintain housing accommodation for every worker and his family residing in the plantations. With a view to avoiding imposition of a sudden burden on the employers, the rules framed under the Act require them to construct suitable accommodation for at least 8 per cent.\* of the resident workers every year until all such workers have been adequately housed. Before any house is constructed, the employer must submit a housing scheme to the Chief Inspector of Plantations giving such details as specification of the period during which accommodation is proposed to be provided, the type and design of the houses and the plan as well as the site-plan of the buildings to be constructed. Provision has been made in the Act for the constitution of Tripartite Advisory Boards by State Governments for consultation in regard to matters connected with housing. Such Housing Advisory Boards have been constituted by all the concerned States and they have been advising the State Governments as regards standards and specifications of houses which may be approved and on other matters connected with the provision of the Act and the rules relating to housing.

The Boards seem to have adopted a flexible attitude in prescribing the standards and appear to have taken the availability of space and terrain into account while fixing the number of living rooms, and their size, design of houses, etc. Consequently, the standards vary from State to State and at times from plantation to plantation in the same State. The Housing Boards of Assam and West Bengal have laid down that a standard house should contain two living rooms (240 sq. ft. in all), one kitchen, an open *verandah* and one enclosure for bathing. The standard laid down in Madras is that the house should have one living room (120 sq. feet), one kitchen (inclusive of bath-cum-wash room) and a *verandah*. In Kerala, the prescribed standard house should have a living room (120 sq. feet), a kitchen, and a *verandah* in front as well as rear. In all the States mentioned above the Boards have recommended that latrines should be provided for each block of 6 to 10 houses.

\*The rules framed by the Government of Uttar Pradesh mention only 5 per cent.

Data relating to housing in tea plantations collected during the course of the Survey show that managements of nearly 98 per cent. of the tea plantations in the country, as a whole, had provided housing accommodation for their employers in 1961-62. The percentage of estates providing housing facilities was 100 in West Bengal and the Residual Group, 98 in Assam and Tripura, and 97 in Southern India. The defaulters were mainly small estates and the reason given by such managements for not providing any housing facility was that all their workers were local people who came to work every day from nearby villages where they had their own houses. Statement 5.9 shows the proportion of estates which provided housing accommodation in Tea Plantations at the time of Survey:—

## STATEMENT 5.9

*Proportion of Tea Plantations Providing Housing Accommodation to Their Employees—1961-62*

Centre	Number of estates	Estimated percentage of estates providing housing accommodation	Estimated percentage of estates providing housing accommodation to			Percentage of estates not providing any housing facility at all
			All workers (i.e., 100 per cent.)	Majority of workers (i.e., 50 to 99%)	Few workers (i.e., below 50%)	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Assam and Tripura	679	97.7	51.4	43.3	5.3	2.3
2. West Bengal	273	100.0	65.6	31.4	3.0	—
3. Southern India	248	96.9	24.2	71.0	4.8	3.1
4. Residual	35	100.0	33.3	66.7	—	—
5. All-India	1,235	98.1	48.7	46.8	4.5	1.9

NOTE—Percentages in columns (4) to (6) relate to units providing housing facilities in col. (3).

It will be seen from Statement 5.9, that in nearly 49 per cent. of the estates in the country as a whole, houses were provided to all workers, in 47 per cent. to a majority of workers and in the rest (4 per cent) only to a few workers. The general practice which was noticed in North-East India was that all workers, other than those who were casual or *basti* labour, were given housing facilities. In Southern India, houses were given to permanent workers only.

#### 5.10.1. Type of Houses

On the basis of statistics collected during the course of the Survey, it is estimated that at that time there were nearly 4.5 lakhs houses in the tea plantations in the different centres in the country as a whole. The following statement 5.10 gives the distribution of houses according to the nature of their construction and the type of accommodation.



## STATEMENT 5.10

*Classification of Houses Provided to Workers in Tea Plantations—1961-62*

Centre	Estimated number of houses provided (in '000)	Percentage of houses according to					
		Nature of constructions			Type of accommodation		
		<i>Pucca</i>	<i>Kutcha</i>	Others*	1 room	2 rooms	3 or more rooms
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	247.2	25.5	62.6	11.9	22.6	71.6	5.8
2. West Bengal ..	137.2	33.4	56.0	8.6	30.4	59.0	10.6
3. Southern India ..	66.1	97.2	1.9	0.9	93.1	5.4	1.5
4. Residual ..	1.8	14.0	86.0	..	87.8	10.2	2.0
5. All-India ..	452.3	38.9	51.8	9.3	35.5	57.9	6.6

\*i.e., semi-pucca or partly pucca and partly kutcha.

It will be seen from Statement 5.10 that out of the total estimated number of houses provided to workers in the Tea Plantations Industry in the country, as a whole, nearly 39 per cent. were *pucca* built, 52 per cent. *kutcha* and the rest (9 per cent.) were of mixed construction. The proportion of *pucca* houses was the highest (97 per cent.) in Southern India and in other centres it varied from 14 per cent. in the Residual Group to 35 per cent. in West Bengal. In other words, houses provided in all centres except Southern India were mostly *kutcha* built. No rent was charged for the houses provided in any centre.

Information collected on the type of accommodation of the houses shows that nearly 58 per cent. of the houses provided to workers in the industry as a whole, were two-rooms tenements, 35 per cent. had only one living room each and the rest (7 per cent.) had 3 or more rooms. As regards individual centres, the position varied considerably. Whereas in Southern India and the Residual Group, the houses were mostly one-room tenements (i.e., 88 and 93 per cent.) respectively, in Assam and Tripura & West Bengal houses with 2 rooms accounted for nearly 72 and 59 per cent. respectively.

The number of rooms discussed above relates to living rooms and in addition, the houses were provided with kitchen, *verandah*, enclosure for bath rooms and common latrines for each line of houses.

In Assam and Tripura and West Bengal, one-room or two-room houses were allotted to ordinary workers and houses with 3 or more rooms were allotted to staff members. In Southern India, one-room houses were invariably allotted to ordinary workers and houses with 2 or more rooms were given to staff members. In all the centres, staff members were very few as compared to other workers.

As already stated, the State Governments have prescribed the standard of housing accommodation to be provided to resident labour. According to the information collected during the course of the Survey, the following are the estimated percentages of houses of the approved and unapproved standard:—

## STATEMENT 5.11

*Distribution of Houses According to Approved/Unapproved Standard—1961-62*

Centre	Estimated number of houses provided (in '000)	Estimated percentage of houses which were of		
		Approved standard	Unapproved standard	for which information regarding standard is not available
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. Assam and Tripura	247.2	41.8	53.3	4.9
2. West Bengal ..	137.2	30.7	58.6	10.7
3. Southern India ..	66.1	82.9	16.7	0.4
4. Residual ..	1.8	13.3	53.8	32.9
5. All-India ..	452.3	44.3	49.6	6.1

The term 'approved standard' does not necessarily denote new types of construction strictly in accordance with the norms prescribed by the State Governments. It includes many old houses which were considered to be 'substantially' in conformity with the standards laid down by the State Governments. The main reason for a very high proportion of houses of the 'approved standard' in Southern India is perhaps the fact that the standard laid by the State Governments requires only one-room houses whereas in North-East India, the standard requires houses to have at least 2 rooms.

5.10.2. *Assistance for Building Houses*

The Survey results show that the practice of extending financial or other assistance to workers for constructing their own houses was virtually absent in the industry. Managements of only one sampled unit each in Assam and Tripura, and West Bengal were found to be giving assistance to workers for building their own houses. In these units, loans ranging from Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 4,000 were being given to staff members for building their own houses. No interest was charged and the amount was recovered in easy instalments ranging from 25 to 50.

## CHAPTER VI SOCIAL SECURITY

Apart from compensation in the event of industrial accidents and maternity benefits to women in tea plantations in Assam, workers employed in the Tea Plantations Industry enjoyed virtually no other social security when an enquiry was conducted by the Labour Investigation Committee in 1944-45. Since then, either as a result of statutory measures or as a consequence of collective agreements the scope of social security enjoyed by workers in tea plantations has widened considerably. The following paragraphs describe the position at the time of the Survey.

### 6.1. *Provident Fund*

Plantation workers in Assam were the first to get the benefit of provident fund when a special Act, known as the Assam Tea Plantations Provident Fund Scheme Act was passed by the State Government in 1955. This Act, which came into force on 15th June, 1955, covers all adult workers excluding clerical, medical and other similar staff, employed in the industry in the State. Though compulsory rate of contribution of employers and workers is 6½ per cent. of the basic wage and dearness allowance, the employees have the option to contribute upto 8½ per cent. In May, 1957 the Central Act known as the Employees' Provident Fund Act, 1952 was extended to plantations in all the States, except Assam. Thus when the present Survey was conducted plantation workers throughout the country were enjoying the provident fund facilities.

Data collected during the Survey show that in 1961-62 provident funds existed in nearly 96 per cent. of the tea plantations in the country as a whole and on 30th September, 1961 nearly 7.95 lakhs or 83 per cent. of the workers employed in the industry were members of these funds. The schemes existed in almost all the large units in the various centres, and the estates which did not have any provident funds were generally small establishments employing only a few workers for short durations. The following Statement 6.1 gives details of provident funds in the different centres—

#### STATEMENT 6.1

#### *Proportion of Tea Plantations Having Provident Fund Schemes—1961-62*

Centre	Number of estates	Percentage of estates having provident fund	Estimated percentage† distribution of estates which had				of other Schemes only	Estimated number of workers* employed in the industry as on the specified date (i.e., 30th Sept. 1961)	Estimated percentage of workers who were members of provident funds
			Employees Provident Fund Scheme	Employees Provident Fund Scheme as well as other Schemes	Assam Tea Plantations Provident Fund Scheme	Assam Tea Plantations Provident Fund Scheme as well as other Schemes			
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
1. Assam and Tripura..	879	95.4	—	—	87.2	12.8	—	5,70,831	81.4
2. West Bengal ..	273	94.1	79.3	19.1	—	—	1.6	2,28,188	87.2
3. Southern India ..	248	96.9	61.1	38.9	—	—	—	1,58,014	80.9
4. Residual ..	35	100.0	100.0	—	—	—	—	4,483	65.6
5. All-India ..	1,235	95.6	32.7	12.1	47.8	7.0	0.4	9,61,516	82.6

\*I.e., those covered under the Plantations Labour Act only.

†Relates to estates in col. (3)

It will be seen from Statement 6.1 that the proportion of estates having provident funds was the highest (100 per cent.) in the Residual Group, followed by Southern India (97 per cent.), Assam and Tripura (95 per cent.) and West Bengal (94 per cent.). But judged from the point of view of membership, the proportion of workers who were members of the provident funds was the highest (87 per cent.) in West Bengal, followed by Assam and Tripura, Southern India (81 per cent. each) and it was the least (66 per cent.) in the Residual Group.

Even though there were different provident fund schemes in the various centres, the rate of contribution was generally  $6\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. of basic wage and dearness allowance or the consolidated wages of the workers in nearly 91 per cent. of the estates having such schemes and in the rest it was higher. In the case of staff members employed in tea plantations in Southern India, however, the rate of contribution was  $8\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. of the basic pay and dearness allowance of the employees. The enhanced rate was introduced in December, 1957 as a result of an agreement between the United Planters' Association of Southern India and the Estates Staff Union of Southern India.

## 6.2. *Pension*

When the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their enquiry there were no regular pension schemes in the industry but the Committee found that a few managements in Assam and West Bengal were paying some pension to some of the employees at their discretion. At the time of the present Survey also, the practice of paying pension or subsistence allowance to workers who retired from service was in vogue in nearly 43 per cent. of the Tea Plantations Industry in the country as a whole. The percentage of units having pension facilities was the highest (55 per cent.) in West Bengal, followed by Assam and Tripura (48 per cent.). In Southern India, the percentage was only 20 while it was 12 in the Residual Group. The details of the pension facilities are discussed below for each centre—

### (a) *Assam and Tripura*

Prior to the introduction of provident fund facilities in 1955, many of the tea estates used to give pension to employees who retired after putting in a long service in the units. After the provident fund scheme was introduced, the pension system was stopped. However, when the Survey was conducted it was found that managements were continuing to pay pension to old employees who had retired earlier and also to employees who had put in long service ranging from 25 to 30 years. Such a payment was purely at the discretion of the managements. There was no regular scheme but a few estates had their own schemes. The categories of workers covered, amount of pension, etc., were also at the discretion of the managements. The amount paid as pension varied from Rs. 4 to Rs. 125 p.m.

### (b) *West Bengal*

The estates, where the practice of paying pension was in vogue, were making such payments to their old employees who had served loyally for a period of 20 to 30 years. The categories of workers, the rate of pension, etc., were entirely discretionary and hence varied from unit to unit. Generally beneficiaries were daily rated workers and staff members and the rate of pension varied from Rs. 10 to Rs. 120 per month. In addition to cash pension, the beneficiaries were also supplied free ration.

(c) *Southern India*

The payment of pension in estates in Southern India also was entirely discretionary. Only a few selected categories of workers were being paid pension and the amount ranged from Rs. 5 to Rs. 20 per month.

(d) *Residual Group*

Only those workers who had put in a continuous service of 25 years or more were being paid a pension at the discretion of management. The sum paid ranged from Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 per month.

### 6.3. *Gratuity*

There is no mention in the report of the Labour Investigation Committee about the existence of any system of paying gratuity in the Tea Plantations Industry. However, it is estimated that at the time of the present Survey the system of paying gratuity was in vogue in about 32 per cent. of the tea plantations in the country as a whole. The percentage of estates having gratuity schemes was the highest (97 per cent.) in Southern India, the corresponding figure for Assam and Tripura and West Bengal being 19 and 10 respectively. The system was not reported in any of the sampled units in the Residual Group. The details are discussed below for each centre—

(a) *Assam and Tripura and (b) West Bengal*

There was no industry-wise agreement for the payment of gratuity. In some of the tea estates in these centres, which had their own gratuity schemes only selected categories of employees, (e.g., clerical and medical staff) were given gratuity, usually at the rate of half a month's basic pay for every completed year of service subject to a maximum of 15 months' basic pay. The main qualifying condition prescribed was completion of 10 to 15 years' service. Only in stray cases gratuity was allowed at the discretion of management to other workers.

(c) *Southern India*

There was no industry-wise agreement for the payment of gratuity. It is known to have been introduced in 1956 as a result of an agreement\* between the United Planters' Association of Southern India and workers' unions in Madras State. According to this agreement, gratuity was payable to workers on retirement after completing at least 5 years continuous service, the rate of payment being 15 days' wages for every completed year of service subject to a maximum of 15 months' wages. In Kerala also, a regular gratuity scheme for workers was introduced in February, 1962 on the basis of an agreement between employers and workers. Under this agreement gratuity was payable to all those employees in tea plantations who had completed a continuous service of 10 years' or more at the rate of fifteen days' wages for every year of service subject to a maximum of 12 months' wages. Gratuity was payable on retirement, death and voluntary retirement on medical grounds.

Staff members were entitled to gratuity on retirement or death on the basis of an agreement arrived at between the United Planters' Association of Southern India and the Estates Staff Union of Southern India in 1957. The minimum qualifying period of service was 5 years' continuous service

\*The agreement was signed on 15th April, 1957 but was brought into effect from October, 1956.

and payment was at the rate of half a month's basic salary for each completed year of continuous service subject to a maximum of 15 months' basic salary.

Information collected during the course of the Survey relating to gratuity is given in the following Statement 6.2:—

STATEMENT 6.2

*Proportion of Tea Plantations having Gratuity Schemes—1961-1962*

Centre	Number of estates	Percentage of estates having gratuity schemes	Percentage of estates where gratuity was paid in the case of			
			Death	Retirement	Voluntary retirement or resignation	Termination of service by employers
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	679	18.7	78.4	100.0	56.7	53.4
2. West Bengal ..	273	10.5	43.0	100.0	57.3	43.0
3. Southern India ..	248	96.9	100.0	100.0	85.4	88.7
4. Residual .. ..	35	..	..	..	..	..
5. All-India .. ..	1,235	32.1	88.9	100.0	74.1	74.1

NOTE—Figures in columns (4) to (7) are percentages to units having gratuity schemes mentioned in col. (3).

*6.4. Maternity Benefits*

At the time of the enquiry of the Labour Investigation Committee excepting in Assam, there was no legislation for the payment of maternity benefits to women workers employed in tea plantations in the country. Subsequently, some of the other State Governments passed laws entitling women employed in plantations in their State to maternity benefits. The Plantations Labour Act, which was passed in 1951, also contained a provision empowering State Governments to frame rules regarding payment of maternity benefits. The position as at the time of the Survey was that maternity benefits were payable to women workers either on the basis of the rules framed by the State Governments under the Plantations Labour Act or on the basis of the State Acts (e.g., Kerala Maternity Benefits Act, 1957). Generally, the qualifying period for benefit was 150 days' service and those who qualified were entitled to payment ranging from Re. 0.72 per day (Assam and Tripura) to Rs. 7.00 per week (West Bengal) for a period of 12 weeks.

Information collected during the Survey shows that in the industry in the country as a whole claims for maternity benefits were made and paid by employers in nearly 93 per cent. of the estates. The following Statement 6.3 gives details for the different centres.

## STATEMENT 6.3

*Proportion of Tea Plantations which Paid Maternity Benefits—1961-62*

Contre	Number of estates	Estimated Percentage of		Estimated number of women workers* employed in the industry on the specified date, i.e., 30th Sept, 1961	Estimated number of claims paid during the calendar year 1961
		Estates employing women	Estates out of those in col. (3) in which claims for maternity benefits were paid		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	679	100.0	94.3	2,70,391	49,482 (18.3)
2. West Bengal ..	273	100.0	97.0	1,11,166	20,720 (18.6)
3. Southern India	248	100.0	89.2	81,581	16,805 (20.6)
4. Residual ..	35	100.0	66.7	2,287	189 (8.3)
5. All-India ..	1,235	100.0	93.1	4,65,425	87,196 (18.7)

\*Relate to those covered under the Plantations Labour Act only.

NOTE—Figures in brackets in col. (6) are percentages to total in col. (5).

### 6.5. Occupational Disease

None of the units surveyed reported any occupational disease.

### 6.6. Industrial Accidents

Data collected during the Survey relating to accidents show that in the industry as a whole, accidents were reported in nearly 11 per cent. of the tea plantations. The percentage of estates where accidents occurred was the highest (41 per cent.) in Southern India, while in Assam and Tripura and West Bengal it was 5 and 2 respectively. No accident was reported in any of the sampled units in the Residual Group.

Judged from the point of view of number of persons involved in accidents, it is estimated that the rate of accident was 7.27 per thousand workers in the industry as a whole; the corresponding rate was 39.01 in Southern India, 0.29 in Assam and Tripura and 0.02 in West Bengal.

As regards the nature of accidents, almost all the cases of accidents in the various centres resulted in 'temporary disability' and cases involving death were practically negligible\*. No cases of permanent disability were reported in any of the sampled estates.

\*The rates of accident involving death was 0.02 per thousand workers for the industry, as a whole and also in Assam and Tripura and West Bengal.

## CHAPTER VII

### INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

During the post-war years, especially since the Independence, considerable attention has been paid to the promotion of industrial peace and the creation of favourable atmosphere for the growth of healthy labour-management relations. The activities of Government in this context have not been confined to mere enactment of laws for speedy settlement of disputes but have extended to creation of atmosphere for the maintenance of cordial relations between workers and employers and promotion of healthy trade unionism and direct negotiations. Some of the new developments in the field of labour-management relations in the plantations industry, since the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their enquiry are the constitution of Industrial Committee on Plantations, Plantations Advisory Boards/Committees in States for settling major issues such as wages, bonus, etc. All these seem to have made substantial contribution towards promotion of industrial harmony. The following paragraphs briefly describe some of the aspects and facts of the industrial relations in the industry.

#### 7.1. *Industrial Disputes*

Separate statistics relating to industrial disputes are available for the Tea Plantations Industry in the country only since 1959 and they are given below—

STATEMENT 7.1  
*Industrial Disputes in Tea Plantations 1959—1962*

Year						Number of disputes	Number of workers in- volved	Number of man-days lost
(1)						(2)	(3)	(4)
1959	..	..	..	..	..	93	49,429	1,08,404
1960	..	..	..	..	..	87	37,883	1,37,824
1961	..	..	..	..	..	73	34,114	1,24,173
1962	..	..	..	..	..	70	37,806	1,25,523

The main reasons for the somewhat heavy loss of man-days in 1960, were strikes in some large tea estates in Assam involving 350 to 1,826 workers for periods ranging from 5 to 21 days. The important issues involved were bonus, and lockout by the managements due to alleged violence of workers. These strikes accounted for nearly 45 per cent. of the total man-days lost in the entire industry. The remaining man-days were lost in other States like Kerala, Madras and West Bengal where there were strikes on account of such issues as bonus, housing facilities, dismissal of some workers. Similarly, in 1961 and 1962, there were major strikes in some large estates in West Bengal which were responsible for the high number of man-days lost in the industry. The disputes related to dismissal of workers, increase in wages, bonus, etc.



## 7.2. Trade Unions

The most remarkable change that has taken place since the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their enquiry is in the sphere of unionisation among tea plantation workers. The Committee had reported that 'while the employers are well organised and powerful, economically as well as politically, the workers are unorganised, illiterate and helpless.'\* The Committee found that in the whole of Assam, there was only one union and in other States they were totally absent. As against such a situation, the present Survey shows that in 1961-62, trade unions existed in nearly 91 per cent. of tea plantations and about 63 per cent. of workers were members of these unions. The details are given in Statement 7.2. It may be mentioned that data regarding trade unions relate to tea plantations and tea factories attached or located in the tea plantations. There were no separate trade unions in the tea factories surveyed and the unions existing in plantations were common for tea factories also.

### STATEMENT 7.2

#### *Extent of Trade Unionism in Tea Plantations—1961-62*

Centro	Number of estates	Estimated percentage of estates where workers had organised themselves into unions	Estimated number of workers† employed in the industries on 30th Sept. 1961	Estimated percentage of workers who were members of trade unions
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. Assam and Tripura	679	93·2	6,15,156	64·2
2. West Bengal ..	273	89·6	2,47,447	50·0
3. Southern India ..	248	90·8	1,70,774	76·4
4. Residual ..	35	79·1	5,882	51·3
5. All-India ..	1,235	91·5	10,39,259	62·7

† i.e., Workers covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 and those working in tea factories (attached to the tea plantations) and covered by the Factories Act.

The percentage of estates having trade unions was the highest (93) in Assam and Tripura; followed by Southern India (91) and West Bengal (90) while it was the lowest in the Residual Group (79). Viewed from the point of membership the highest proportion of workers who were members of unions was noticed in Southern India (76 per cent.), followed by Assam and Tripura (64 per cent.), West Bengal (50 per cent.) and the Residual Group (51 per cent.). The growth of trade unionism apparently has not been entirely on healthy lines as everywhere there was a problem of multiplicity of unions. It is estimated that of the estates where unions were functioning, in about 15 per cent., there was only one union, in nearly 64 per cent. two unions and in the rest (21 per cent.), there were three or more

\* Report on an Enquiry into Conditions of Labour in Plantations in India—D.V. Rege,—p. 191.

unions. The following Statement 7.3 gives details for the different centres—

STATEMENT 7.3

*Distribution of Tea Plantations according to Number of Trade Unions—  
1961-62*

Centre	Number of estates	Percentage of estates which had trade unions	Estimated percentage distribution of estates having unions according to number of trade unions			Percentage of estates where unions were recognised by managements
			One union	Two unions	Three or more unions	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Assam and Tripura	679	93.2	11.7	83.3	5.0	100.0
2. West Bengal ..	273	89.6	29.9	56.7	13.4	75.0
3. Southern India ..	248	90.8	3.4	22.3	74.3	100.0
4. Residual ..	35	79.1	57.8	42.2	—	84.3
5. All-India ..	1,235	91.5	15.1	64.4	20.5	94.2

It is evident from the above statistics that excepting in the Residual Group, a good majority of the estates had 2 or more unions in the different centres. Recognition was accorded to the trade unions in nearly 94 per cent. of the estates having trade unions in the industry in the country as a whole. Only in Assam and Tripura and Southern India managements of all the estates having unions had accorded recognition to them. The reasons given by the managements in other centres for not recognising the unions were that the unions themselves had not pressed for it or that workers were members of some other unions and hence recognition to new unions was not necessary. In some cases, the managements did not recognise the unions as they held that once the unions were recognised, they came forward with unnecessary demands.

Information collected during the course of the Survey concerning the main activities of trade unions show that the main activities of nearly 84 per cent. of the unions in the entire industry were securing of claims of their members under various labour laws. Very few unions provided recreation facilities or indulged in welfare activities, etc. The following Statement 7.4 gives details for the different centres—

STATEMENT 7.4

*Estimated Percentage Distribution of Unions according to Activities—  
1961-62*

Centre	Recreation facilities	Welfare	Adult education centres	Securing of claims under various labour laws	Relief to distressed members of the unions
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	12.5	0.6	1.3	82.4	14.0
2. West Bengal ..	20.8	10.8	4.5	76.6	38.8
3. Southern India ..	0.6	11.6	—	89.9	3.9
4. Residual ..	11.0	—	—	100.0	—
5. All-India ..	10.6	5.7	1.5	83.8	15.5

### 7.3. Agreements

An encouraging feature, which was noticed in the field of labour-management relations, is the large number of agreements concluded by employers and workers through direct negotiations or through the good offices of the Plantations Labour Committees, Industrial Committee on Plantations, Conciliation Officers, etc. The Survey results show that such agreements were concluded in nearly 88 per cent. of tea estates in the country as a whole since 1956. Most of these agreements were on an industry-wide basis in a particular area and affected several units. They covered a wide range of subjects, such as, wage revision of workers and staff, bonus for the different years, gratuity, provision of certain amenities, etc., and were instrumental in bringing about not only uniformity in conditions of service of workers in various areas but also in promoting industrial peace. Details regarding these agreements have already been discussed at the relevant places in the report.

### 7.4. Standing Orders

As in the case of factories, the provision of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act has been made applicable to all plantations employing 100 or more workers. It is estimated that in the industry in the country as a whole, nearly 90 per cent. of the tea plantations were employing 100 or more workers at the time of the Survey and were consequently obliged to frame Standing Orders for their employees. Of these, about 96 per cent. of the units had actually done so. The following Statement 7.5 gives details for the different centres—

STATEMENT 7.5

#### *Proportion of Tea Plantations Having Standing Orders—1961-62*

Centre	Number of estates	Estimated percentage of estates		Estimated percentage of estates which were not under obligation but had framed Standing Orders	Estimated percentage of estates which had framed Standing Orders whether under obligation or not
		Under statutory obligation to frame Standing Orders	Out of col. (3) which had framed Standing Orders		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	679	92.0	95.0	..	87.4
2. West Bengal ..	273	97.0	96.9	..	94.1
3. Southern India ..	248	81.5	100.0	9.3	90.8
4. Residual .. ..	35	58.1	100.0	..	58.1
5. All-India .. ..	1,235	90.0	96.5	1.9	88.7

NORE—Percentages of estates in columns (5) and (6) relate to total in col. (2).

Standing Orders framed in all the centres were under the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946, and every where they had been duly certified by the certifying officers.

There were combined Standing Orders for all the categories of workers in Assam and Tripura and West Bengal. In Southern India and the Residual Group also, they were mostly combined, but in a few estates there were separate Standing Orders for the clerks and other staff members.

### 7.5. *Welfare Officers*

The Plantations Labour Act lays down that every plantation where in 300 or more workers are ordinarily employed should employ such number of welfare officers as may be prescribed and authorises the State Governments to prescribe duties, qualifications and conditions of service, etc., of such officers. Till the time of the Survey, no State Government had framed any rules on the subject. Nevertheless, the Survey results show that of the estates employing 300 or more workers, welfare officers had been appointed in nearly 12 per cent. of the estates each in Southern India, and West Bengal and in 3 per cent. in Assam and Tripura, i.e., 7 per cent. in the country as a whole. None of the estates covered in the Residual Group had appointed any such officer. Of the estates employing less than 300 workers none had any Welfare or Labour Officer.

It was found that Welfare Officers had been appointed by only some of the large estates having a large labour force. These Officers were discharging such duties as were assigned by the managements. Apart from looking to the implementation of various welfare facilities provided by the managements, and also attending to recruitment and supervising the time office, these officers were required to attend to courts, tribunals, etc., on behalf of managements whenever occasions arose.

### 7.6. *Works Committees*

The formation of a Works Committee is a statutory obligation for estates employing 100 or more workers. The results of the Survey show that in the industry in the country as a whole, nearly 90 per cent. of the estates were employing 100 or more workers at the time of the Survey and consequently were under a statutory obligation to constitute Works Committees. Of these, only about 16 per cent. had actually done so. The percentage of estates having Works Committees was the highest (57) in the Residual Group, followed by Southern India (33), while it was only 17 and 9 in West Bengal and Assam and Tripura respectively. Of the units having Works Committee, only in about 13 per cent, there was equal representation of workers and in the rest, managements invariably had more number of representatives. The number of meetings held ranged from 1 to 6 during a year in most of the cases. In fact, there was no meeting held at all in nearly 23 per cent. of the estates having such Committees in the country as a whole. Items discussed differed from centre to centre. Generally speaking, allowances, leave and holidays, welfare facilities, travelling allowance, bonus and gratuity were the most common items discussed.

The main reasons for the non-formation of Works Committees or their improper working, wherever they existed, seem to be the lack of interest shown by the employers as well as labour. Some of the employers pleaded ignorance and said that they have not been pressed by the State authorities to constitute such Committees. Lack of co-operation from trade unions was adduced as another reason by the managements. Labour leaders on the other hand contended that the employers did not co-operate with

them. Rivalry among trade unions was also reported to be one of the additional factors for the absence or improper functioning of Works Committees.

### 7.7. Other Committees

Except for some such Committees as housing committee, Grievance Committee, *garden panchayat* in a very few sampled units in Assam and Tripura, there was no other committee in any of the centres.

### 7.8. Grievance Procedure

The Standing Orders framed by the managements in the various centres contained provisions relating to the redress of grievances of workers. These provisions were more or less uniform in all the centres of the industry and generally laid down that all complaints arising out of unfair treatment or wrongful exaction by the employer or his agents should be submitted to the Manager/Superintendents of the Estates, who would enquire into the grievances and give their decision. If workers were not satisfied with the decision of the Manager, they could appeal to the Managing Agents of the Company wherever they existed or to the owners of the Estates or to the Labour Commissioners (in Assam only). No time limit was fixed for the disposal of the complaints at any level. In the case of Assam, however, it was noticed that the Assam Branch of the Indian Tea Association had prescribed, apart from the Standing Orders, a regular procedure for the redress of grievances of workers. According to the procedure prescribed by the Association for its member-estates and in force at the time of the Survey, any aggrieved workman was required to place his complaint, in the first instance, before the Manager who was to give his decision within 7 days. If the decision of the manager was unacceptable, the complainant had the right to refer the matter to Standing Committee set up by the Union consisting of 3 garden workmen who were members of the union. The Committee examined the complaint and if considered necessary, could make a representation to the manager within 7 days. The manager, considered the appeal and was normally required to give his decision within 7 days. However, if it was necessary for him to refer the matter to his supervisors or his Zone Secretary, the decision could be given within 15 days. If the appeal was dismissed, the Garden Union could refer the matter to the Branch Union, and who, in turn, could contact the Zone Secretary of the Assam Branch of the Indian Tea Association within 15 days. The Zone Secretary was normally expected to dispose of the case within 20 days of receipt of the Branch Union's appeal but this time limit could be extended by mutual agreement. If no settlement was arrived at, the matter was to be placed before the Conciliation Officer.

The findings of the Survey reveal that in the industry in the country as a whole, nearly 89 per cent. of the tea estates had prescribed grievance procedure in their Standing Orders. The percentage of such units was the highest, (94) in West Bengal followed by Southern India (91), Assam and Tripura (87) and it was the lowest (58) in the Residual Group.

The procedure actually adopted in the tea estates, whether having Standing Orders or not, and the different centres was, however, found to be different from that prescribed in the Standing Orders. The workers usually took oral complaints to the Managers/Superintendents/Tea Conductors (in Southern India) and the Managers or the I.T.A.

of at that level. In case of dissatisfaction with the decision, the matter was taken up with the Manager either by the Union representatives or by the individual workers themselves. In all cases, the decision of the Manager was final. Rarely workers approached the Managing Agents or authorities superior to the Manager or the Conciliation Officers.

#### *7.9. Industrial Committee on Plantations/Plantation Labour Committees/ Advisory Boards*

In the matter of industrial relations in the plantation industry, the role played by the Industrial Committee on Plantations has been very significant. This Committee, which functions on an all-India basis, has been holding periodical meetings attended by the representatives of the employers' Associations and central trade union organisations, as well as officials of the State and Central Governments. Since its inception, all important issues affecting the industry and labour have invariably been first discussed by the Committee and its deliberations have helped the industry to arrive at agreements on such important subjects like wages, bonus, gratuity, etc. Practical difficulties in the matter of implementing the provisions of the Plantations Labour Act, etc., have also been discussed by the Committee and workable solutions evolved. In fact, this Committee gives a lead to the Tripartite Plantations Labour Committees/Advisory Boards in the various States in the matter of maintaining proper employer-employee relationship in the industry.

The Tripartite Plantations Labour Committees/Advisory Boards have devoted considerable attention in the past to the matter of solving many problems and helped in arriving at industry-wide agreements on subject like wages, gratuity, bonus, etc. They have, from time to time, been examining the practical difficulties in implementing the provisions of the law relating to various welfare facilities, etc., and have prescribed standards of housing, medical facilities, etc. In short, the Industrial Committee on Plantations as well as the State Plantations Labour Committees or Advisory Boards have not only helped the industry in the matter of arriving at mutual agreements on vital matters such as wages, bonus, gratuity, etc., but also have contributed substantially towards industrial harmony in the industry.

## CHAPTER VIII

### LABOUR COST

Information pertaining to labour cost was collected during the Survey, in respect of employees covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 and whose wages did not exceed Rs. 300\* per month. The enquiry pertaining to labour cost was modelled on the lines of the Study of Labour Cost in the European Industry, made by the International Labour Office in 1956, with such modifications as were considered necessary in the light of conditions in India. For instance, in view of the fact that in India wages are paid on the basis of 'days' instead of 'hours' as in European countries, the data were collected for the man-days and not man-hours. Similarly, it was found in the course of the pilot enquiry that most of the industrial establishments did not maintain any separate records of premium payments made for leave or holidays or payments for days not worked and hence these were dropped as separate items but included under 'basic wages'. Certain additions were made in the list either on the basis of the decisions of the Study Group on Wages Cost appointed by the Ministry of Labour and Employment in 1959 or with a view to eliciting separate information on some of those items on which employers have to incur expenses under labour laws in the country, *e.g.*, lay off, retrenchment, etc.

In order to ensure uniformity and maintain comparability of the data, the field staff were asked to collect information, as far as possible, for the year ending with 30th September, 1961, which was the specified date fixed for the enquiry. However, in view of the fact that financial years of the establishments do not coincide with the year ending with the specified date of the Survey and also differ from unit to unit and from area to area, the field staff were instructed that wherever it was found difficult or time consuming to cull-out the information for the above period, they could collect data for the latest period of 12 months for which information was available subject to the condition that such a period covered a major part of the twelve months, ending on the specified date. Data available show that except for a few stray cases, it was possible to collect information for the period of 12 months major portions of which covered the year ending on the specified date. The information given below can, therefore, be treated to relate to the 12-month period ending September, 1961.

Tea factories generally form an integral part of the establishments having tea plantations. In fact labour force is more or less common and interchangeable and there is more or less only one set of amenities, etc., for workers employed in estates and factories, and there is practically no difference in the amenities, etc., enjoyed by factory or estate labour. Hence, except for such records as wage registers and attendance registers, there is a common account for various items of expenditure relating to labour. In

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\*In case of factory industries, data on labour cost were collected in respect of employees getting less than Rs. 400 per month. This was in pursuance of the decision taken by the study group on wage cost appointed by the Ministry of Labour and Employment in 1959. Since the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 does not apply to employees whose monthly wages exceed Rs. 300, data on labour cost also were restricted to only those who are covered by the Act and getting wages not exceeding Rs. 300 per month. In the case of workers employed in tea factories attached to tea plantations, information was collected in respect of those who were covered under the factories Act and whose wages were less than Rs. 400 per month.

view of this situation it was not possible to collect information relating to labour cost separately for plantation workers and workers employed in tea factories. Therefore, the information given below is combined for workers in tea plantations and workers employed in tea factories attached to sampled tea plantations.

With a view to forming a better estimate of labour cost, salaries and allowances, etc., of those persons who were engaged in connection with any welfare item, amenity, etc., even though they were covered under the Plantations Labour Act/Factories Act and were receiving wages not exceeding Rs. 300 per month (or less than Rs. 400 per month in case of workers of tea factories), were not included in the general head 'wages'. Similarly, the man-days of such persons were excluded from the general head "man-days worked". Expenses incurred in connection with such persons were recorded against the item for which they were engaged.

### 8.1. *Labour Cost per Man-day Worked*

The estimated labour cost per man-day worked in the country as a whole worked out to Rs. 2.89 in Tea Plantations and factories attached to such estates during the year ending 30th September, 1961. The following Statement 8.1 gives details for the different centres—

#### STATEMENT 8.1

#### *Labour Cost per Man-day Worked in Tea Plantations and Tea Factories— 1960-61*

Centre	Estimated number of man-days in '000	Labour cost per man-day worked (In Rs.)
(1)	(2)	(3)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	1,38,969	2.90
2. West Bengal ..	55,318	2.95
3. Southern India ..	40,644	2.77
4. Residual .. ..	1,313	1.77
5. All-India .. ..	2,36,244	2.89

The labour cost per man-day worked was the highest in West Bengal (Rs. 2.95) followed by Assam and Tripura (Rs. 2.90) and Southern India (Rs. 2.77); it was the lowest (Rs. 1.77) in the Residual Group. A break-up of the labour cost per man-day worked according to components is given in the following Statement 8.2.



## STATEMENT 8.2

*Labour Cost per Man-day Worked by their Components*

(In Rupees)

Centre	Wages (including dearness allowance, leave and holiday wages and incentive bonus)	Premium pay for overtime and late shifts	Bonuses	Other cash pay- ments	Pay- ments in kind	Social security contributions	
						Obliga- tory	Non- obliga- tory
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1. Assam and Tripura	2.17 (74.83)	0.01 (0.34)	0.12 (4.14)	0.07 (2.41)	0.04 (1.38)	0.18 (6.21)	0.01 (0.34)
2. West Bengal	2.11 (71.53)	0.01 (0.34)	0.12 (4.07)	0.05 (1.69)	0.21 (7.12)	0.18 (6.10)	0.01 (0.34)
3. Southern India ..	1.91 (68.95)	0.01 (0.36)	0.14 (5.05)	0.08 (2.89)	0.02 (0.72)	0.17 (6.14)	0.08 (2.89)
4. Residual	1.49 (84.18)	—	0.05 (2.82)	—	0.02 (1.13)	0.10 (5.65)	0.01 (0.57)
5. All-India	2.11 (73.01)	0.01 (0.35)	0.12 (4.15)	0.06 (2.08)	0.08 (2.77)	0.18 (6.23)	0.02 (0.69)

Centre	Subsidies	Cost of running welfare centres	Direct benefits	Some Other payments related to labour cost	Any others (Protec- tive equip- ments)	Total
(1)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
1. Assam and Tripura	0.30 (10.35)	—	*	*	*	2.90 (100.00)
2. West Bengal	0.26 (8.81)	—	*	*	*	2.95 (100.00)
3. Southern India ..	0.29 (10.47)	—	*	*	0.07 (2.53)	2.77 (100.00)
4. Residual	0.08 (4.52)	—	*	*	0.02 (1.13)	1.77 (100.00)
5. All India	0.29 (10.03)	—	*	*	0.02 (0.69)	2.89 (100.00)

\*Indicates that the expenses were less than Re. 0.005.

NOTE—Figures in brackets are percentages to the respective totals in col. (14).

8.2. *Components of Labour Cost*8.2.1. *Wages*

This component comprised basic wages, dearness allowance, incentive and/or production bonus and attendance bonus. Since payments made for leave and holidays were not separately available in some units, the amount shown under 'wages' include sums paid for the days worked as well as the days not worked but paid for.

It is evident from Statement 8.2 that wages accounted for about 73 per cent. of the total labour cost per man-day worked in the industry in the country as a whole. The proportion of wages to the total labour cost per man-day varied from 69 per cent. in Southern India to 84 per cent. in the Residual Group. The following Statement 8.3 gives the break-up of wages cost by sub-components—

STATEMENT 8.3  
*Break-up of Wages Cost by Sub-components*

				(In Rupees)
Centro	Basic wages and dearness allowance or consolidated wages	Incentive and production bonus	Attendance Bonus	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	2.16 (99.54)	0.01 (0.46)	—	2.17 (100.00)
2. West Bengal .. ..	1.90 (90.05)	0.21 (9.95)	—	2.11 (100.00)
3. Southern India .. ..	1.76 (92.15)	0.15 (7.85)	—	1.91 (100.00)
4. Residual .. ..	1.47 (98.66)	0.01 (0.67)	0.01 (0.67)	1.49 (100.00)
5. All-India .. ..	2.03 (96.21)	0.08 (3.79)	*	2.11 (100.00)

\*Indicates that the expenses were less than Re. 0.005.

Basic wages and dearness allowance or consolidated wages, including leave and holiday wages, accounted for nearly 96 per cent. of the total wages cost in the industry in the country as a whole. The share of this element was almost cent. per cent. in Assam and Tripura, 99 per cent. in the Residual Group, 92 per cent. in Southern India while it was only 90 per cent. in West Bengal.

Incentive and production bonus for extra plucking constituted about 4 per cent. of the total wages cost in the industry as a whole. The percentage of this sub-component was the highest in West Bengal (10) followed by Southern India (8). In other centres, it was almost insignificant.

Attendance bonus constituted a negligible proportion of the total wage cost in the Residual Group and in the country as a whole this sub-component was practically nil.

### 8.2.2. *Premium for Over-time*

In plantations over-time was rarely done and hence this item was found to be very insignificant as is evident from Statement 8.2.

### 8.2.3. *Bonuses*

Payments made as profit-sharing bonus, year end or festival bonus accounted for Re. 0.12 or about 4 per cent. of the total labour cost per man-day worked in the industry in the country as a whole. The percentage of this item to the total labour cost per man-day was the highest (5) in Southern India, followed by Assam and Tripura and West Bengal (4 each) while it was only about 3 in the Residual Group.

### 8.2.4. *Other Cash Payments*

This sub-group accounted for nearly 2 per cent. of the total labour cost per man-day worked in the industry in the country as a whole. The share of this sub-group to the total labour cost was 1.7 per cent. in West Bengal, 2.4 per cent. in Assam and Tripura and 2.9 per cent. in Southern India. In the Residual Group, this sub-group did not feature at all. The main items included in this sub-group were servant allowance, *sirdari* commission or *Kangani* commission, travelling allowance, i.e., way expenses given to workers while going to their native places on leave, house rent allowance, charge allowance, etc.

### 8.2.5. *Payments in kind*

This item accounted for nearly 3 per cent. of the total labour cost per man-day worked in the industry in the country as a whole. The share of this item constituted as much as 7 per cent. of the total labour cost per man-day worked in West Bengal mainly due to widely prevalent practice of giving food grains at concessional rates. In Assam and Tripura also, the practice of supplying food grain at concessional rates was in vogue but share of this item was only 1.4 per cent. of the total labour cost per man-day worked. In Southern India and the Residual Group, expenses on this item related entirely to free supply of tea to workers by the managements.

### 8.2.6. *Social Security*

Expenses incurred by employers under this group, were recorded separately under two sub-groups, viz., (a) Obligatory, and (b) Non-obligatory. Expenses recorded in connection with obligatory social security were those which the employers were required to incur in compliance to certain labour laws, awards, etc. Non-obligatory social security payments recorded were those which the managements paid to their workers as a result of any agreement between employers and workers but without any legal compulsion (e.g., gratuity, pension). The following Statement 8.4 gives the break-up of the social security contributions in the different centres—

Items included under the sub-group 'obligatory' together accounted for 6.2 per cent. and the sub-group 'non-obligatory' accounted for only 0.7 per cent. of the total labour cost per man-day worked in the industry in the country as a whole. There was no significant variation in the percentage of 'obligatory' social security contributions to the total labour cost per man-day worked in the different centres.

Of the total expenses incurred on 'obligatory' social security contributions, provident fund was the most important item accounting for as much as 72 per cent. of the total labour cost under the group 'obligatory' in the industry in the country as a whole. The share of this item was as much

**STATEMENT 8.4**  
**Cost of Social Security Contributions Per Man-day Worked**

(In Rupees)

Obligatory						
Centre	Provident fund	Retrenchment compensation	Lay off	Employees State Insurance Corporation	Compensation for Employment injury	Occupational disease
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Assam and Tripura	0·13 (72·22)	..	..	*	*	*
2. West Bengal ..	0·14 (77·78)	*	..	..	*	*
3. Southern India ..	0·13 (76·47)	*	*	*	*	..
4. Residual ..	0·09 (90·00)	..	—	..	..	..
5. All-India ..	0·13 72·22	*	*	*	*	*

Obligatory							
Centre	Maternity benefit	Sickness benefit	Others	Total	Non-obligatory	Total obligatory and non-obligatory	Percentage of social security contributions to total labour cost per man-day worked
(1)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
1. Assam and Tripura	0·03 (16·67)	0·02 (11·11)	*	0·18 (100·00)	0·01	0·19	6·55
2. West Bengal ..	0·03 (16·67)	0·01 (5·55)	..	0·18 (100·00)	0·01	0·19	6·44
3. Southern India ..	0·02 (11·76)	0·02 (11·77)	*	0·17 (100·00)	0·08	0·25	9·03
4. Residual ..	0·01 (10·00)	..	..	0·10 (100·00)	0·01	0·11	6·22
5. All-India ..	0·03 (16·67)	0·02 (11·11)	*	0·18 (100·00)	0·02	0·20	6·92

\*Indicates that the expenses were less than Re. 0·005.

as 90 per cent. in the Residual Group, and in other centres it varied from 72 per cent. (in Assam and Tripura) to 78 per cent. (in West Bengal).

The other items in the order of importance under this group were 'maternity benefits' and 'sickness benefits' which accounted for nearly 17 per cent. and 11 per cent. respectively of the total labour cost under the group 'obligatory'. Statement 8.4 gives the details in respect of the different centres.

Non-obligatory items mainly related to pension, subsistence allowance and gratuity paid by the managements. It is evident from Statement 8.4 that expenses under 'non-obligatory' items were only Re. 0.02 per man-day worked in the industry in the country as a whole. Except in the case of Southern India, the cost per man-day of this sub-group was insignificant. The main reason for high figure in Southern India was that there were gratuity schemes for the bulk of the working force in the centre.

Social security contributions, i.e., obligatory and non-obligatory items taken together constituted nearly 7 per cent. of the total labour cost per man-day worked in the industry as a whole. The percentage was the highest (9) in Southern India and in other centres it was of the order of 6 per cent.

#### 8.2.7. *Subsidies*

Under this head, data were collected in respect of expenditure incurred by employers on providing various types of facilities to workers and other members of their families. The facilities listed were: Medical and Health Care, Canteens, Restaurants and Other Food Services, Company Housing, Building Funds, Credit Unions and Other Financial Aid Services, Creches, Educational Services, Cultural Services (e.g., Library, Reading Room, etc.), Recreational Services (Clubs, Sports, Theatres, Cinema, etc.), Transport, Sanitation (at work places only), Drinking Water Facilities, Vacation Homes, etc. The amounts recorded were net payments by the employers, including depreciation but excluding capital expenditure. In the course of the pilot survey, it was found that in most of the cases, the employers did not maintain any records separately for the above mentioned items or expenses related not only to the persons falling within the scope of the Study but to others as well. Consequently, the field staff was asked to obtain estimates from employers wherever separate statistics were not available. In case any expenses were incurred on workers covered by the Study as well as other employees the amount was estimated for workers covered by the Study on the basis of the proportion they formed to the total employees concerned. In tea plantations, it was a common practice that the managements maintained combined expenses for a number of estates under their control and all of which were not in the sample. In such cases, expenses were estimated on the basis of proportion of workers employed in the sampled units to the total employed in all the estates under the control of such managements. Similarly, there were a few estates which were having mixed crops, (e.g., tea estate having rubber trees also) where managements kept common records for expenses incurred on providing various types of benefits to persons attending to various crops. In all such cases, the expenditure was estimated on the basis of the proportion of the employment for the particular crop to the total employment for the estate as a whole. Statement 8.5 gives the cost of subsidies per man-day worked in tea plantations and tea factories.

STATEMENT 8.5  
*Cost of Subsidies Per Man-day*

(In Rupees)

Centre	Medical and health care	Canteens	Restaurants and other food services	Company housing	Cheeks	Educational services	Cultural services
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1. Assam and Tripura	0.12 (40.00)	*	*	0.11 (36.67)	0.01 (3.32)	0.01 (3.33)	*
2. West Bengal ..	0.11 (42.31)	*	..	0.10 (38.46)	0.01 (3.85)	0.01 (3.85)	*
3. Southern India ..	0.11 (57.93)	0.01 (3.45)	*	0.11 (37.93)	0.03 (10.34)	0.02 (6.90)	*
4. Residual ..	0.05 (62.50)	..	..	0.01 (12.50)	0.01 (12.50)	..	..
5. All-India ..	0.12 (41.38)	*	*	0.11 (37.93)	0.01 (3.45)	0.01 (3.45)	*

  

Centre	Recreational services	Transport	Sanitation (at work places)	Drinking water	Building fund, credit unions and other financial aid services	Others	Total	Percentage of cost on subsidies to total labour cost
(1)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)
1. Assam and Tripura	0.01 (3.33)	..	0.01 (3.34)	0.03 (10.00)	..	*	0.30 (100.00)	10.35
2. West Bengal ..	0.01 (3.84)	*	*	0.02 (7.69)	..	*	0.26 (100.00)	8.81
3. Southern India ..	0.01 (3.45)	*	*	*	..	*	0.29 (100.00)	10.47
4. Residual ..	*	..	*	0.01 (12.50)	..	*	0.08 (100.00)	4.52
5. All-India ..	0.01 (3.45)	*	0.01 (3.45)	0.02 (6.89)	..	*	0.29 (100.00)	10.03

\*Indicates that the expenses were less than Re. 0.005.

It will be seen from Statement 8.5 that the bulk of the total expenses on the group 'subsidiaries' was accounted for by Medical and Health Care (Re. 0.12) and Company Housing (Re. 0.11) in the industry in the country as a whole. Their respective share being 41 per cent. and 38 per cent. of the total under this group. As between the different centres the percentage share of Medical and Health Care varied from 38 in Southern India to 62 in the Residual Group. So far as company housing is concerned, its share ranged from 12.5 per cent. in the Residual Group to 38.5 in West Bengal. The significant share of these two items is obviously due to the fact that they are statutory obligations on employers.

Expenses on other items such as creches, educational facilities, recreation facilities, etc., were practically insignificant though they are also statutory obligations.

#### 8.2.8. *Direct Benefits*

Direct benefits are those benefits which are paid by employers directly to the beneficiary without any intermediary or external agency. Such benefits were given to the workers on occasions like birth, marriage, death or dependency (family allowance). The Survey has, however, revealed that the expenses on these items were insignificant at the all-India level.

#### 8.2.9. *Some Other Payments Related to Labour Cost*

Under this group, 'expenses incurred by employers on such items as cost of recruitment, vocational training, recruitment examination, apprenticeship and training facilities, on the job medical services' (e.g. first-aid equipment, ambulance rooms) were included. The findings of the Survey reveal that expenses on this group were practically negligible as is evident from col. (12) of Statement 8.2.

#### 8.2.10. *Any Others (Protective Equipments)*

Since supply of protective equipments (e.g., *cumbli* or blankets, rain coats or umbrellas, hats, etc.), is a statutory obligation on employers, data on the expenditure incurred on account of this item were collected separately. The results of the Survey show that the expenditure on protective equipments accounted for Re. 0.02 or an insignificant proportion\* to the total labour cost per man-day worked in the industry in the country as a whole. As between the different centres, the expenses on these items were practically negligible in Assam and Tripura and West Bengal, while they were Re. 0.02 and Re. 0.07 in the Residual Group and Southern India respectively.

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\* i. e., 0.7 per cent.

## CHAPTER IX

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The Tea Plantations Industry is the most important plantation industry of the country and provides direct employment to nearly a million persons. It is mainly concentrated in the States of Assam and West Bengal in North-East India and Madras and Kerala in South India. A noticeable feature of the industry is that whereas 85 per cent. of the estates in North India are all holdings above 50 hectares, the position is reverse in South India where nearly 96 per cent. of the estates are holdings up to 50 hectares only. In fact nearly 91 per cent. of the estates are small holdings up to 5 hectares only. Since Plantations Labour Act applies to estates admeasuring 10.117 hectares or more and in which 30 or more workers are employed, existence of a large number of small holdings in South India is significant from the point of applicability of the Plantations Labour Act.

It is estimated that on 30th September, 1961, the total number of persons employed in tea plantations covered under the plantations Labour Act, 1951 was about 9.66 lakhs. Of these, nearly 5.73 lakhs or 59 per cent. were employed in Assam and Tripura, 2.29 lakhs or 24 per cent. in West Bengal, 1.59 lakhs or 16 per cent. in Southern India and the rest i.e., 4.50 thousands or less than 1 per cent. were employed in centres included in the Residual Group. A study of distribution of the working force according to broad occupational groups shows that out of the total working force about 92 per cent. were 'Production and Related Workers (including Supervisory)' in the industry, in the country. The proportion of this group ranged between 91 per cent. (Assam and Tripura) and 96.5 (Residual Group). Persons coming under the broad group 'Watch and Ward and Other Services' constituted the next important group constituting nearly 6 per cent. of the total employed in the industry as a whole. Persons falling in other groups formed only an insignificant proportion.

The composition of the labour force continues to reflect the impact of the initial system of recruitment when planters provided employment to families. Consequently, the working force even now comprises men, women, adolescents and children. The Survey results show that women outnumbered men in all the centres surveyed. The proportion of men and women to the total employed in the industry, as a whole was of the order of 45 and 48 per cent. respectively. Adolescents, who were found to be employed in nearly 17 per cent. of the tea estates in the country, constituted only about one per cent. of the working force. Similarly, children accounted for about 6 per cent. of the estimated total working force, even though the practice of employing Child Labour was in vogue in as many as 71 per cent. of the estates. The percentage of children to the total working force was the highest (13 per cent.) in the Residual Group and the lowest (2.5 per cent.) in Southern India. Both the systems of payment, i.e., time as well as piece rates, were prevalent in the industry. However, majority of workers everywhere were time-rated.

Plucking of tea leaves was generally paid on piece-rate basis everywhere but this operation was limited to certain periods.



The practice regarding settling wages of workers varied from centre to centre. For instance, the predominant pay period in Southern India and the Residual Group was a month, in West Bengal it was a week and in Assam it was a fortnight or a week.

Information relating to employment status of production workers employed directly, collected during the Survey shows that of the total number of such workers, about 83 per cent. were permanent, about 6 per cent. temporary and the remaining (11 per cent.) were almost all casual workers. The proportion of permanent workers was the highest (89 per cent.) in West Bengal and the lowest (71 per cent.) in the Residual Group. The practice of employing *badli* labour was totally absent in the industry.

In the industry as a whole, about 38 per cent. of the production workers had a service of 5 or more but less than 10 years, about 24 per cent. a service of 10 years or more, 19 per cent. a service of one or more but less than 5 years and another 19 per cent. had a length of service of less than one year. Except for the Residual Group, workers having a service of 5 or more years constituted the majority everywhere. In the Residual Group, nearly 58 per cent. of the production workers had a service length of less than 5 years.

Information relating to absenteeism collected during the Survey shows that absenteeism rate in the industry, as a whole, was about 21 per cent., it was 22 per cent. in West Bengal, 21 per cent. in Assam and Tripura, 19 per cent. in Southern India and only 14 per cent. in the Residual Group. The rate of accessions and separations was not high, being of the order of nearly one per cent. in the entire industry. The accession rates varied from 0.2 per cent. in West Bengal to 4.0 per cent. in the Residual Group. Similarly, the separation rates ranged from 0.4 per cent. in West Bengal to 4.0 per cent. in the Residual Group.

Information relating to recruitment system in tea plantations collected during the Survey shows that the practice of recruiting workers through intermediaries like *Sardars*, labour contractors or *Kanqames*, which was prevalent from times immemorial, has given way to the system of direct recruitment by the managements themselves.

There has been a significant upward movement of wages since the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their enquiry. With the application of Minimum Wages Act to Plantations Industry, minimum rates of wages were fixed by the State Government and revised from time to time. The time-rates of daily wages of men workers prevalent at the time of the Survey varied from Rs. 1.53 to Rs. 1.89 in Assam, Rs. 1.81 to Rs. 1.84 in West Bengal, Rs. 1.56 to Rs. 1.72 in Madras and Re. 1.00 to Rs. 1.44 in U.P. They were Rs. 1.25 in Tripura, Rs. 1.72 in Kerala and Re. 1.00 in Punjab. Generally everywhere women and children were paid less. On the basis of the data collected, it is estimated that the average daily earnings of 'all workers' in the industry in the country, as a whole, worked out to Rs. 2.18 per day in September 1961. The corresponding figures for the different centres being Assam and Tripura Rs. 2.29, West Bengal Rs. 2.14, Southern India Rs. 1.86, and the Residual Group—Rs. 1.44. Production workers, earned on an average Rs. 2.23 per day in Assam and Tripura, Rs. 2.06 in West Bengal, Rs. 1.80

in Southern India and Rs. 1.38 in the Residual Group or Rs. 2.11 in the industry, in the country, as a whole. The average daily earnings of clerical staff were Rs. 7.54 and of those in the group 'Watch and Ward and Other Services' Rs. 2.04 in the industry, in the country, as a whole.

Information relating to components of earnings of 'all workers' indicate that basic earnings accounted for about 87 per cent. of the total daily earnings of a worker in the industry in the country, as a whole. The percentage of this component ranged between 73 (W. Bengal) and 99 (Residual Group). The next important item was production or incentive bonus for extra green leaves plucked which formed nearly 9 per cent. of the total daily earnings of a worker in the industry, as a whole. The rest of the earnings were accounted for by 'other cash allowances', food grain concessions, etc.

The system of paying dearness allowance, as a separate component was in vogue in all the units surveyed in West Bengal, in nearly 97 per cent. of the estates in Assam and Tripura and in nearly 88 per cent. of the units in Southern India. It was totally absent in the Residual Group. Except for West Bengal and few estates in Southern India nowhere dearness allowance was linked to any consumer price index number.

Information concerning bonus collected during the Survey shows that the practice of paying profit-sharing bonus or year-end bonus or festival bonus was in vogue in all the centres, the percentage of units paying such bonus ranged between 16 (Residual Group) and 97 (Southern India). The system of paying profit sharing bonus was in vogue only in Assam and Tripura and West Bengal.

At the time of the present Survey, the weekly hours of work for adults in tea plantations ranged from 46 to 50 in 81 per cent. of the estates in the country, as a whole and in nearly 11 per cent. they were less than 46 hours. In about 6 per cent the hours were not fixed. In all the individual centres also, the weekly hours ranged from 46 to 50 in majority of the units. As regards daily hours of work for adults, in nearly 71 per cent. of the units in the country, as a whole, they were only 8 excluding the rest interval, in 20 per cent. less than 8 hours, in an insignificant percentage more than 8 hours and in the rest (9 per cent.) there were no fixed hours of work as the work was done on a task basis.

Even though Plantations Labour Act prescribes only 40 hours of work during a week for adolescents and children, in nearly 15 per cent. the limit was being exceeded and in another nearly 20 per cent. the weekly hours had not been fixed. The spread-over everywhere was within the prescribed limit. Everywhere workers were given rest intervals but in about 5 per cent. of estates the duration was less than that prescribed under law.

Timings, as notified by the managements, were not found to be observed by the managements of about 44 per cent. of the estates in the country, as a whole.

It was found that sanitary arrangements at work-places existed only in 4.5 per cent. of the estates in the country, as a whole. The percentage of units providing latrines was 14 in Southern India and it was almost insignificant in Assam, Tripura and West Bengal. Conservancy arrangements

were totally absent in the Residual Group. The position in regard to urinals was even worse.

Workers at the time of the present Survey enjoyed statutory benefit of annual leave and sick leave under the Plantations Labour Act and festival holidays under certain States (e.g., Madras and Kerala). The Survey results show that nearly 97 per cent. of the estates in the industry, in the country, as a whole were granting annual leave with wages to their workers. The percentage of such estates ranged between 66.7 in the Residual Group to 100 in West Bengal. Nearly 93 per cent. of the estates granted sick leave with pay. The percentage of these estates varied from 66.7 in the Residual Group to nearly 97 in Assam and Tripura. The system of granting casual leave, with pay existed in about 71 per cent. of the estates, in the country, as a whole. The practice was widely prevalent in Southern India, Assam and Tripura. Elsewhere only a small proportion of estates granted this benefit. The system of allowing National and Festival holidays with pay to workers was in vogue in nearly 98 per cent. of estates in the industry, in the country, as a whole.

Drinking water facilities at work-sites were found to exist in nearly 83 per cent. of the estates in the industry, as a whole. All the estates surveyed in the Residual Group had complied with the law in this regard but in other centres a certain percentage of estates were defaulters, the largest being in Southern India.

Canteen facilities were found to exist only about 16 per cent. of the estates which were under a statutory obligation to provide canteens, in the industry, in the country, as a whole. The percentage of defaulting estates was as high as 95 in West Bengal and 86 in Assam and Tripura. The corresponding percentage was 66 for Southern India and 50 for the Residual Group.

Even though all the estates in the different centres were employing women, only about 91 per cent. of them were under a statutory obligation to provide creche facilities and of these, only about 74 per cent. had provided such facilities. The compliance of the law was partial in all the centres and the percentage of defaulting estates ranged from 4 in Southern India to 79 in the Residual Group. Even the standard of maintenance equipment, etc., of creches left much to be desired.

Medical facilities in one form or the other were found to exist in nearly 98 per cent. of the estates in the country, as a whole. Only a very small percentage of estates in Assam and Tripura as well as the Residual Group provided no facilities at all.

Recreation facilities were found to exist in nearly 87 per cent. of the estates in the country, as a whole; the percentage of units having such facilities was 91 each in Assam and Tripura as well as West Bengal, 80 in Southern India, and only 46 in the Residual Group. The predominant types of recreation facilities were indoor games and/or outdoor games as well as some cultural programmes on festive occasions in all the centres.

Except for the Residual Group everywhere else managements had provided educational facilities. The percentage of estates providing such facilities was 75 in Assam and Tripura, 61 in West Bengal and 58 in Southern India or 66 in the entire country. The facilities provided were in the form of primary schools only.

Articles for protection from weather to workers were being supplied only in about 39 per cent. of the estates in the industry, as a whole. The percentage of units supplying protective clothing or other equipments being 97 in Southern India, 79 in the Residual Group, 28 in West Bengal and only 21 in Assam and Tripura. The types of articles supplied varied from centre to centre.

In 1961-62 housing facilities were provided by the managements of nearly 98 per cent. of the estates in the country, as a whole. As regards individual centres, all the units surveyed in West Bengal and the Residual Group, 98 per cent. of the estates in Assam and Tripura and 97 per cent. in Southern India had provided housing facilities to their employees employed in the estates and the factories attached to them. Nearly 44 per cent. of the houses were of the approved standard.

It is estimated that provident fund schemes existed in nearly 96 per cent. of the estates covering nearly 83 per cent. of the workers employed in the industry, in the country, as a whole. The practice of paying pension or subsistence allowance to workers who retired from service was in vogue in 55 per cent. of the estates in West Bengal, in 48 per cent. in Assam and Tripura, in 20 per cent. in Southern India and only 12 in the Residual Group. There were no regular schemes as such and pension, wherever paid, was purely at the discretion of the managements.

The system of payment of gratuity at the time of retirement and/or death was in vogue in nearly 97 per cent. of the estates in Southern India, in nearly 19 per cent. in Assam and Tripura and only in about 10 per cent. of the estates in West Bengal. It was totally absent in the Residual Group.

In 1961-62 maternity benefits were claimed and paid in nearly 93 per cent. of the estates. The percentage of such estates ranged between nearly 67 (Residual) and 97 (West Bengal). It is estimated that during the calendar year 1961 nearly 19 per cent. of women received maternity benefits. The percentage of women receiving benefits varied from 8.3 in the Residual Group to 21 in Southern India.

There have been quite significant developments in the field of industrial relations since the Labour Investigation Committee conducted their enquiry. The most remarkable change has been in the sphere of trade unions movement in the industry. As against an almost complete absence of trade unionism at the time of enquiry of the Committee, trade unions existed in nearly 92 per cent. of estates in 1961-62 and nearly 63 per cent. of workers were members of such unions. As in most of the industries in the country, tea plantations also had the problem of multiplicity of unions. In nearly 85 per cent. of estates, where there were unions, the number of unions was two or more. Apart from securing of claims of workers under the various labour laws, there were no other activity of the trade unions in the different centres.

Another healthy feature in the field of labour-management relations in the industry is the growth of collective bargaining and agreements. The Survey shows that agreements had been concluded in nearly 88 per cent. of tea estates since 1956. The agreements concluded were usually on an industry-wide basis in various centres and covered a wide field of subjects such as wages, bonus, gratuity, etc.

Even though till the time of the Survey none of the State Governments had prescribed rules regarding the appointment of welfare officers, nearly 12 per cent. of the estates each in Southern India and West Bengal, and about 3 per cent. of the estates in Assam and Tripura, i.e., in 7 per cent. in the country as a whole, had appointed welfare officers.

Nearly 90 per cent. of the tea plantations in the industry in the country, as a whole, were under a statutory obligation to constitute Works Committee at the time of the Survey. Of these, only about 16 per cent. had actually done so.

The Industrial Committee on Plantations and the Plantations Labour Committees/Advisory Boards set up in various States were found to be playing an important role in the matter of promoting not only welfare measures but also industrial peace.

Data pertaining to labour cost collected during the course of the Survey show that the cost per man-day worked in the industry, in the country, as a whole was Rs. 2.89. Of this sum, 'wages' element accounted for 73.01 per cent.; other important items in the order of their importance were subsidies (10.03 per cent.), social security contributions (6.92 per cent.), bonuses (4.15 per cent.), payments in kind (2.77 per cent.), other cash payments (2.08 per cent.), protective equipments (0.69 per cent.) and premium for overtime (0.35 per cent.). The total labour cost per man-day in the different centres was the highest (Rs. 2.95) in West Bengal followed by Assam and Tripura (Rs. 2.90), Southern India (Rs. 2.77) and it was the lowest (Rs. 1.77) in the Residual Group.

## APPENDIX I

### *A Brief Note on the Sample Design and the Method of Estimation Adopted*

#### *1. Sample Design*

For the Survey of Labour Conditions, a stratified sampling design with industry as a stratum, with further regional strata for those industries which were found to be highly concentrated in particular regions or areas was followed. The registered factories/plantations\* belonging to those industries for which regional stratification was found necessary were stratified and each centre or area of high concentration was taken as a separate regional stratum of the industry and the remaining scattered units were clubbed together into a single residual stratum. Units in each industry/regional stratum were divided into two size-groups, i.e., large and small. The cut off point used for the classification of units into two size groups was the average daily employment in various centres of the industry in 1960. Thus the cut off points used were 602 for Assam and Tripura, 697 for West Bengal, 564 for Southern India and 127 for the Residual Group.

In regard to sample size, it was thought that a sample of 25 per cent. from large size group and 12½ per cent. from the small size group would yield reasonably reliable result. Accordingly these were adopted as the sampling fraction.

The ultimate sampling units, namely registered plantations within an industry/regional stratum were arranged by contiguous districts in a serpentine fashion so that districts formed a continuous chain from one State to another. Having arranged the list of units in the above manner, the units above the optimum cut off point were taken in the upper size class and the rest in the lower-size class. From these size groups, the required number of units were selected by systematic sampling with a random start. The frame on the basis of which the sample was selected in the case of tea plantations was the list of plantations covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 and listed with the State Governments for the year 1960.

#### *2. Method of Estimation*

In the course of this Survey, various characteristics were studied, some of which were correlated with employment whereas there were others which were not so correlated. Consequently, slightly different methods were used for working out estimates for these two cases. For estimating the totals of those characteristics which are highly correlated with employment such as absenteeism, labour turnover, earnings, labour cost, etc., ratio of total employment was used as the blowing-up factor. On the other hand, for estimating the totals of those characteristics which are not directly correlated with employment, such as daily hours of work, units levying fines, etc., the ratio of units was used as the blowing-up factor. Estimates of percentages have been arrived at by computing in each case the ratio of the estimates of the totals for the two characteristics involved.

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\*Plantations referred to here are those which were listed with the State Governments and were covered under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951.

In any stratum, the estimate for the total of characteristics not correlated with employment is given by

$$X = \frac{N_u - N'_u}{n_u - n'_u} \sum_i X_{iu} + \frac{N_L - N'_L}{n_L - n'_L} \sum_i X_{iL} \quad \dots \quad \dots \quad \dots \quad (1)$$

The summation extending over all the sampled units surveyed in the stratum;

Where  $X$  = the estimated total of X-characteristic for a Particular stratum;

$N_u$  and  $N_L$  = the number of units in the original population as featuring in the 1960 list, which was used as frame in the upper and lower size groups respectively of the stratum concerned;

$N'_u$  and  $N'_L$  = the number of units which featured in the 1960 list but were not featuring in the latest available list nearest to the period of the Survey in the upper and lower size groups, respectively of the stratum concerned;

$n_u$  and  $n_L$  = the total number of units in the sample (from 1960 list) in the upper and lower size groups respectively of the stratum concerned;

$n'_u$  and  $n'_L$  = the number of sampled units, which were found at the time of the Survey to be closed or to have changed the line of production and hence left out in the upper and lower size groups respectively of the stratum concerned;

$X_{iu}$  and  $X_{iL}$  = the total of X-characteristic in the i-th sample unit of the upper and lower size groups respectively of the stratum concerned.

The totals for an Industry are obtained by summing up the totals obtained on the basis of the above formula for each one of the strata of the industry.

In any stratum the estimate for the Y-characteristic correlated with Employment is given by:

$$Y = \frac{E}{n_u - n'_u} \sum_i Y_{iu} + \frac{E}{n_L - n'_L} \sum_i Y_{iL} \quad \dots \quad \dots \quad \dots \quad (2)$$

The summation extending over all the sampled units surveyed in the stratum.

Where  $Y$  = the estimated total of the Y-characteristic for a particular stratum.

$\sum^E N_u - N'_u$  and  $\sum^E N_L - N'_L$  = the total employment in 1960 in the  $N_u - N'_u$  and  $N_L - N'_L$  units respectively.

$\sum^E n_u - n'_u$  and  $\sum^E n_L - n'_L$  = the total employment in 1960 in  $n_u - n'_u$  and  $n_L - n'_L$  sampled units respectively.

$Y_{iu}$  and  $Y_{iL}$  = the total number of Y-characteristic in the i-th sample unit of the upper and lower size groups respectively of the stratum concerned.

The total for an industry are obtained by summing up the totals obtained on the basis of the above formula for each one of the strata of an industry.



## APPENDIX II

### *Note on Labour Conditions in Tea Factories Attached to the Sampled Tea Plantations Covered During the Survey*

Tea factories were not in the list of 44 industries which were included for coverage under the Survey of Labour Conditions Scheme. However, it was felt that it would be helpful if information concerning workers employed in tea factories could also be collected and made available. Since tea factories formed an almost integral part of tea estates and since the labour force is almost common and in view of the fact that managements provide a common set of welfare facilities, etc., it was felt that broad features of the conditions of workers employed in tea factories could be brought out if only those tea factories were covered as were attached to tea estates sampled for the Survey. This, it was felt, would also effect economy. Consequently, only those tea factories were covered as were attached to the sampled tea estates in the various centres. In 1961 the total number of tea factories registered under the Factories Act 1948 was 1,207. Of these, 211 or 17.5 per cent. were covered. In terms of the number of workers employed, these 211 tea factories accounted for 17,174 out of a total of 102,584 i.e., 16.7 per cent. The details are given in the following Table.

TABLE A-1  
*Number of Tea Factories Covered during the Survey—1961-62*

Centre	Total No. of tea factories registered under the Factories Act in 1961	Total No. of workers employed in tea factories registered under the Factories Act in 1961	No. of sampled tea plantations covered	Number of tea factories attached to the sampled plantations which were covered	Number of workers employed in tea Factories covered
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	636	59,799	121	112 (17.61)	9,937 (16.62)
2. West Bengal ..	282	27,136	48	49 (17.38)	4,262 (15.71)
3. Southern India ..	252	13,419	47	44 (17.46)	2,649 (19.74)
4. Residual .. ..	37	2,230	6	6 (16.22)	326 (14.62)
5. All-India .. ..	1,207	1,02,584	222	211 (17.48)	17,174 (16.74)

NOTE—Figures in brackets in Column (5) are percentages to figures in column (2) and those in column (6) are percentages to figures in column (3).

Since no separate sample was drawn, no attempt has been made to give estimates of totals. The information is being given only in the form of ratios and proportions of various characteristics.

*Employment*

On the basis of the information concerning composition of the working force collected during the Survey, it is estimated that out of the total number of workers employed in tea factories in the country, as a whole, about 91 per cent. were 'Production and Related Workers (including Supervisory)', 5 per cent. were in the broad occupational group 'Watch and Ward and Other Services', 3 per cent. 'Clerical and Related Workers (including Supervisory)' and the rest were distributed among the broad groups 'Administrative, Executive and Managerial Personnel' and 'Professional, Technical and Related Personnel\*'. The following Table gives the details for the different centres.

TABLE A-2  
*Proportion of Workers in Various Broad Occupational Groups in Tea Factories—September, 1961*

Centre	Professional, Technical and Related Personnel	Administrative, Executive, and Managerial personnel	Clerical and Related Workers (including Supervisory)	Production and Related Workers (including Supervisory)	Watch and Ward and Other Services
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	0.5	0.2	4.6	88.8	5.9
2. West Bengal ..	1.3	0.1	3.1	90.4	5.1
3. Southern India ..	0.1	0.1	0.2	97.3	2.3
4. Residual .. ..	..	1.1	3.7	92.4	2.8
5. All-India .. ..	0.6	0.2	3.5	90.6	5.1

NOTE—Information relates to total number of workers employed in tea factories and covered under the Factories Act only. The proportion of workers who were not covered under the Factories Act was very insignificant in all centres and hence not discussed separately.

Of the total working force in tea factories in the industry, in the country, as a whole, about 91 per cent. were men, 8 per cent. were women and the rest adolescents or children. As regards individual centres, the percentage of men to the total employed in the industry was the highest (98) in West Bengal, followed by Assam and Tripura (92), Southern India (85) while it was only 50 in the Residual Group, the remaining 50 per cent. being women. Employment of child labour was noticed only in Assam and Tripura, while adolescents were engaged in Assam and Tripura as well as West Bengal. In other centres, they were totally absent.

Almost all production workers were time-rated only, the proportion of piece-rated workers being very insignificant† in all the centres.

Information concerning employment status of production workers collected during the Survey shows that nearly 93 per cent. of production workers were permanent, 5 per cent. casual, and the rest (2 per cent.) were temporary. The proportion of permanent workers was the highest (97 per cent.) in Southern India, followed by West Bengal (95 per cent.), Assam and Tripura (91 per cent.), while in the Residual Group, they accounted for only about 63 per cent. The practice of employing *badli* labour was totally absent in the industry.

\*The definition used were the same as for tea plantation workers, i.e., the I.L.O. 'International Standard Classification of Occupations'.

† i.e., 0.2 per cent. of the total.

Information relating to length of service of production workers is given in the following Statement:—

TABLE A-3

*Distribution of Production Workers Directly Employed According to Length of Service*

Centre	Percentage of production workers with a service of				
	Less than 1 year	One or more but less than 5 years	5 or more but less than 10 years	10 or more but less than 15 years	15 years and above
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	12.1	22.3	62.6	1.8	1.2
2. West Bengal ..	5.3	7.4	28.6	29.4	29.3
3. Southern India ..	6.4	8.3	15.8	33.0	36.5
4. Residual .. ..	37.1	16.0	14.5	16.2	16.2
5. All-India .. ..	9.9	16.1	45.1	14.3	14.6

Except in the case of the Residual Group, majority of workers in all the other centres had a service length of 5 years or more.

Information relating to absenteeism of production workers excluding casual labour collected for a period of 12 months ending with September, 1961 shows that the rate of absenteeism was 11.6 per cent. in tea factories in the country, as a whole. The rate was the highest (13.4 per cent.) in the Residual Group; it was 12.4 per cent. in West Bengal, 11.5 per cent. in Southern India and 11.2 in Assam and Tripura. As regards variations in the rate of absenteeism between the different months of the year, the highest rate of absenteeism was noticed during the month of February in all the centres, except the Residual Group. The percentage of absenteeism during this month being 26.5 in West Bengal, 23.8 in Assam and Tripura and 20.8 in Southern India. In the Residual Group, absenteeism was the highest (22.6 per cent.) in May.

The rate of accessions and separations was not high in tea factories. Except the Residual Group, where the accession and separation rates were 2.4 and 1.7 per cent. respectively, in all other centres, they were less than one per cent.

The main reasons for the majority of separations were 'discharge or dismissals' in Assam and Tripura, while quitting the jobs by workers was the chief cause in all other centres.

Recruitment system for the factories was not different from the one discussed in the report for the tea plantations. Workers were generally recruited directly by the managements in all the centres.

### Wages and Earnings.

Wage revisions already discussed in Chapter III of this report for the plantation workers cover workers in tea factories also. There was no separate revision for these workers and hence not discussed here.

Information concerning the pay period of workers collected during the Survey is given below.

TABLE A-4

#### *Pay Period of Workers Employed in Tea Factories—September, 1961*

Centro	Percentage distribution of workers according to their pay period			
	Month	Fortnight	Week	Day
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	20.3	50.9	28.8	..
2. West Bengal .. ..	91.9	1.1	7.0	..
3. Southern India .. ..	99.4	..	0.6	..
4. Residual .. ..	69.7	..	..	30.3
5. All-India .. ..	51.9	29.3	18.3	0.5

The following Table shows the average daily earnings of 'all workers' as well as those of production workers employed in the tea factories in the different centres.

TABLE A-5

#### *Estimated Average Daily Earnings of Workers in Tea Factories—September, 1961*

Centro	(In Rupees)					
	Average daily earnings of					
	All* workers	Production Workers				All production workers
		Men	Women	Adolescents	Children	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	3.17	3.05	2.01	1.07	0.98	2.94
2. West Bengal .. ..	2.87	2.63	1.85	2.03	..	2.61
3. Southern India .. ..	2.54	2.74	1.42	..	..	2.54
4. Residual .. ..	1.69	1.50	1.41	..	..	1.44
5. All-India .. ..	2.97	2.88	1.73	1.50	0.98	2.77

\*i.e., those covered under the Factories Act.

As in the case of plantation workers, the average daily earnings of 'all workers' employed in tea factories in Assam and Tripura, were the highest (Rs. 3.17) followed by West Bengal (Rs. 2.87), and Southern India (Rs. 2.54)..

The average daily earnings were the lowest (Rs. 1.69) in the Residual Group. In the case of production workers also, the same trend was noticed, i.e., the average daily earnings were the highest (Rs. 2.91) in Assam and Tripura and the lowest (Rs. 1.44) in the Residual Group. Men production workers invariably earned more than women.

Information relating to the average daily earnings of the lowest paid workers in tea factories shows that they earned on an average Rs. 2.27 per day, the corresponding figures for the different centres being Rs. 2.41 in Assam and Tripura, Rs. 2.30 in West Bengal, Rs. 1.93 in Southern India and Rs. 1.39 in the Residual Group. The main occupations which were normally the lowest paid were Tea Makers, Mazdoors, Helpers, Packers, Fitters, Sorters, Cleaners, etc., in the different centres.

The following Table gives the earnings of 'all workers' employed in tea factories by components.

TABLE A-6

*Estimated Average Daily Earnings by Components of All Workers in Tea Factories—September, 1961*

Centre	(In Rupees)									
	Basic Earnings*	Production or Incentive bonus	Night-shift Allowance	House rent Allowance	Transport Allowance	Overtime	Food grains concession	Other Cash Allowances	Other Concessions in kind	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	2.46 (77.60)	0.23 (7.26)	..	**	0.01 (0.31)	0.27 (8.52)	0.02 (0.63)	0.17 (5.36)	0.01 (0.32)	3.17
2. West Bengal	2.50 (87.11)	0.03 (1.05)	**	..	**	0.12 (4.18)	0.11 (3.83)	0.09 (3.13)	0.02 (0.70)	2.87
3. Southern India	2.24 (88.19)	0.08 (3.15)	..	..	..	0.12 (4.73)	**	0.09 (3.54)	0.01 (0.39)	2.54
4. Residual ..	1.66 (98.23)	..	..	..	..	..	**	0.01 (0.59)	0.02 (1.18)	1.69
5. All-India ..	2.42 (81.48)	0.15 (5.05)	**	**	**	0.21 (7.07)	0.04 (1.35)	0.14 (4.71)	0.01 (0.34)	2.97

Note—Figures in brackets are percentages to total in col (11).

\* i.e., basic wage, dearness allowance, wherever paid separately, or consolidated wages.

\*\*Indicates that the amount was less than Re. 0.005.

Basic earnings, i.e., consolidated wages or basic wage and dearness allowance, wherever they were paid separately accounted for the bulk of the total daily earnings of a worker in all the centres. The percentage of this item was the highest (98) in the Residual Group followed by Southern India (88), and West Bengal (87) while it was only about 78 in Assam and Tripura.

The system of dearness allowance, paid as a separate component, was in vogue in all the centres excepting the Residual Group. Details have already been discussed in Chapter III of the report which apply to workers in tea factories also.

The practice of paying production or incentive bonus for the extra work turned out by workers was in vogue in tea factories in all the centres except the Residual Group. Usually, the incentive bonus was paid when the production of tea crossed certain norms. The norms, as also the rate of payment, varied considerably from factory to factory.

Whereas in some units in Assam and Tripura, the payment of production or incentive bonus was made at the end of the season if the total production in the units exceeded the norm, in some units, monthly payment at a flat rate was given during the working season, i.e., June to November. In the latter units, the rate varied from month to month. Earnings in the form of production or incentive bonus constituted 5 per cent. of the total earnings. The percentage was the highest in Assam and Tripura (7) and in the Residual Group it was nil.

Overtime payment accounted for about 7 per cent. of the daily earnings of a worker in the tea factories in the country, as a whole. The percentage was the highest (8.5) in Assam and Tripura, followed by Southern India (4.7) and it was only 4 in West Bengal. No overtime earnings were reported from factories in the Residual Group.

It will be seen from Table A-6 that 'Other cash allowances' constituted 4.7 per cent. of the total daily earnings of a worker, the corresponding percentages for the different centres being 5.4 for Assam and Tripura, 3.5 for Southern India, 3.1 for West Bengal and only 0.6 for the Residual Group. The nature of allowances, their rate, qualifying conditions, etc., were the same as have been discussed in Chapter III of this report. Similarly, other benefits and concessions, e.g., food grain concession, way expenses, bonus granted to tea factory workers were the same as enjoyed by tea plantation workers and mentioned in Chapter III of the report.

### *Working Conditions*

Hours of work in tea factories are regulated by the Factories Act, 1948 which limits the daily hours of work to 8 and weekly hours to 48. Information collected in the course of the Survey shows that all the tea factories in the different centres were respecting the law in the matter of hours of work. The percentage of factories having an 8-hour day, excluding rest interval, was 91 in the country as a whole. The rest worked less than 8 hours. As regards the individual centres, all the units surveyed in Southern India and the Residual Group, had only an 8-hour day, while in Assam and Tripura 90 per cent. of the factories had an 8-hour day for adults and the remaining (10 per cent.) worked for less than 8 hours. Similarly, in West Bengal, nearly 84 per cent. of the factories had an 8-hour day and in the remaining units (16 per cent.) working hours were less than 8 per day.

Information concerning shifts collected during the Survey shows that nearly 79 per cent. of the factories in the country as a whole, had only one shift, nearly 18 per cent. had 2 shifts and the rest (3 per cent.) three shifts. The following Table gives details for the different centres.

TABLE A-7

*Estimated Distribution of Tea Factories According to Number of Shifts—  
1961-62*

Centro	Percentage of tea factories which worked		
	One Shift	Two Shifts	Three Shifts
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1. Assam and Tripura .. .. .	88.4	11.0	0.6
2. West Bengal .. .. .	76.3	23.7	..
3. Southern India .. .. .	53.4	33.5	13.1
4. Residual .. .. .	87.6	..	12.4
5. All-India .. .. .	78.9	17.9	3.2

In the matter of conservancy the position was found to be much better in tea factories. The Survey results show that latrines were provided in nearly 82 per cent. of the tea factories in the country as a whole, the corresponding percentage for the different centres being 72 in Assam and Tripura, 88 in West Bengal and 100 each in Southern India and the Residual Group. The latrines provided were of 'water borne septic tank' type in majority of the units in the different centres. Construction of latrines was of a permanent nature in nearly 93 per cent. of the factories in the country, as a whole and in the rest it was only of a temporary nature. The percentage of factories where latrines were of permanent structure was as follows: Assam and Tripura—95, West Bengal—87, Southern India—98, and in the Residual Group cent per cent. Water taps in the latrines were provided in nearly 60 per cent. of the factories in Assam and Tripura, in 75 per cent. in West Bengal, 78 per cent. in Southern India and in 67 per cent. in the Residual Group or in 68 per cent. of the factories in the country as a whole.

Even though the law requires that separate latrines should be provided for women workers, the Survey results show that compliance was only partial in Assam and Tripura and in Southern India, the percentages of factories providing separate latrines for women being 87 and 95 respectively in these centres.

Proper screening arrangements existed in nearly 94 per cent. of the factories in the country, as a whole, the percentages for the different centres being 93 for Assam and Tripura, 92 for West Bengal, 96 for Southern India and 100 for the Residual Group.

Urinals were provided only in 20 per cent. of the factories in Assam and Tripura, in 44 per cent. in West Bengal, 19 per cent. in Southern India, and 67 per cent. in the Residual Group. Thus, the over-all percentage of factories providing urinals was only 27 for the country, as a whole.

The following Table A-8 gives details of the factories granting various types of leave with pay:—

TABLE A-8

*Estimated Percentage of Tea Factories Granting Various Types of Leave with Pay—1961-62*

Centre	Estimated percentage of factories granting			
	Earned leave (Annual leave)	Casual leave	Sick leave	Festival and National holidays
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. Assam and Tripura ..	100.0	89.8	97.5	100.0
2. West Bengal ..	100.0	20.7	80.9	97.1
3. Southern India ..	98.1	100.0	100.0	100.0
4. Residual ..	100.0	..	66.7	100.0
5. All-India ..	99.6	72.0	92.9	99.3

Earned leave was granted to ordinary workers in tea factories as per the scales prescribed in the Factories Act, but members of staff enjoyed better leave facilities in certain centres like Southern India as a result of mutual agreements between employers and staff unions. The details can be seen from Chapter IV of the Report.

Information relating to number of workers who enjoyed leave according to the number of days of leave availed, collected during the Survey shows that nearly 93 per cent. of the total employed in 1961 in the industry as a whole enjoyed leave up to 15 days, and the rest (7 per cent.) enjoyed leave of over 15 days. The position was more or less the same in the various centres. Even though there is no statutory obligation under the Factories Act for the grant of sick leave, the managements of tea factories were granting sick leave at the same scale as prescribed for the plantation workers under the Plantations Labour Act. Similarly, casual leave as also national and festival holidays were being granted in the same manner as have already been discussed in Chapter IV for workers employed in tea estates.

All the factories in the different centres were granting a day off to their workers in a week.

### *Welfare and Amenities*

Drinking water facilities were provided in all the tea factories attached to the sampled estates in Southern India and the Residual Group but the percentage of factories providing drinking water facilities was only 94 in Assam and Tripura and 97 in West Bengal. The predominant type of arrangement was 'tap water' in West Bengal and Southern India. Earthen pitchers and buckets or drums were provided in the Residual Group while in Assam and Tripura tube wells and tap water were the main arrangements.



Washing facilities existed in nearly 73 per cent. of the factories in the industry as a whole. The percentage of factories providing washing facilities was 87 in Southern India, 84 in West Bengal, 65 in Assam and Tripura but it was only 33 in the Residual Group. The main type of washing facilities was 'taps on stand pipes' in all the centres. Separate washing facilities for women workers were provided in only 27 per cent. of the total number of factories employing women in the entire country. Of the factories employing women, only 54 per cent. in West Bengal, 48 per cent. in Southern India, 27 per cent. in the Residual Group and only about 2 per cent. in Assam and Tripura were providing separate washing facilities for women workers.

Since tea factories are covered under the Factories Act, the only legal obligation is to provide first-aid boxes and ambulance rooms only if employment is 500 or more. Information collected during the Survey shows that first-aid boxes were maintained by all the tea factories covered in Southern India and the Residual Group. In Assam and Tripura and West Bengal, however, the percentage of tea factories having first-aid boxes was 96 and 93 respectively. The factories which did not have first-aid boxes were all small units.

Even though the law requires that first-aid boxes should be under the charge of trained first aiders, the Survey results show that in nearly 82 per cent. of the factories in the industry, as a whole, none of the first-aid boxes was under the charge of any trained first-aider. Only in the Residual Group most of the first-aid boxes (nearly 88 per cent.) were under the charge of trained first-aiders. Elsewhere majority of them were kept under the charge of untrained persons.

Information concerning contents of the first-aid boxes shows that the compliance with the law was partial in all the centres. In fact, the percentage of factories having incomplete first-aid boxes was as high as 78 in West Bengal, 62 in Assam and Tripura, 37 in Southern India and 21 in the Residual Group.

A very insignificant proportion of tea factories, and that too in Assam and Tripura\*, were under a statutory obligation to provide ambulance rooms but none had provided them.

Apart from first-aid boxes, the other medical facilities (e.g., hospital, dispensary, etc.), which the tea estates were providing to estate workers were also made available to workers in tea factories attached to such estates. The details of these facilities have been discussed in Chapter V.

Similarly, the other facilities such as canteens, rest shelters, recreation, education, grain shops, cooperative stores, housing facilities, etc., which were provided to the estate workers, the details of which have already been discussed in Chapter V, were enjoyed by workers employed in tea factories also.

#### *Social Security:*

Social security measures which have been discussed in Chapter VI for plantation workers are equally applicable to workers employed in tea factories also. However, separate statistics collected during the Survey pertaining to certain items such as provident fund, maternity benefits, etc., are discussed below.

\*1.3 per cent. in Assam and Tripura or 0.7 per cent. in the country, as a whole.

The Employees' Provident Fund Act was extended to tea plantations and factories with effect from May, 1957 in all the centres, except Assam, where the Assam Tea Plantations' Provident Fund Scheme Act, was introduced in June 1955. The Survey results show that in 1961-62 provident funds existed in nearly 97 per cent. of the factories in the industry as a whole.

All the factories attached to sampled tea estates in Southern India and the Residual Group had provident funds, but the percentage of such factories was 98 and 91 in Assam and Tripura and West Bengal respectively. The details of qualifying conditions, rate of contributions, etc., are the same as discussed in Chapter VI for plantation workers. As regards the membership of provident funds, it is estimated that of the total number of workers employed in tea factories in the industry as a whole, in September, 1961 nearly 92 per cent. were members of provident funds; the corresponding percentage being 92 for Assam and Tripura, 93 for West Bengal, 95 for Southern India and only 64 for the Residual Group.

There was no regular pension schemes in the industry but the practice of paying some pension or subsistence allowance, purely at the discretion of the managements, to certain categories of employees was in vogue in some units in the different centres. In these cases, the system which was prevalent in tea plantations, to which the tea factories were attached, applied to workers in factories also. Details of rate of pension, persons entitled, etc., can be seen from Chapter VI of the Report.

Similarly, gratuity schemes discussed earlier for plantation workers in the different centres are applicable to workers employed in tea factories in these centres.

Maternity benefits available to plantation workers, as already discussed in Chapter VI, were enjoyed by women workers employed in tea factories also. Statistics collected separately for the tea factories show that during 1961-62 maternity benefits were paid in nearly 19 per cent. of the factories in Assam and Tripura, in 36 per cent. each in West Bengal and Southern India and in nearly 54 per cent. in the Residual Group. Thus, the overall percentage for the industry as a whole was 29.

It is estimated that out of the total number of women employed in 1961 in the tea factories attached to sampled tea estates in the different centres, nearly 33 per cent. of women in Assam and Tripura, 11 per cent. in West Bengal, 10 per cent. in Southern India and 8 per cent. in the Residual Group were paid maternity benefits by the managements. Thus, the overall percentage of women workers who were paid maternity benefits was 21 for the industry, as a whole.

Information relating to accidents collected during the Survey shows that in 1961 accidents occurred in nearly 19 per cent. of the tea factories in the industry, as a whole. The percentage of factories where accidents occurred was the highest (41) in Southern India, followed by Assam and Tripura (18), and West Bengal (9). No accidents were reported in any of the factories attached to the sampled estates in the Residual Group.

The Survey results show that the rate of accident was 8.12 per thousand workers in the industry, in the country, as a whole. It was the highest

viz., 30.64 per thousand workers in Southern India, and it was low in other centres being 4.42 in Assam and Tripura and 2.28 in West Bengal.

As regards the nature of accidents, all the cases of accidents resulted in temporary disability in Southern India. In Assam and Tripura and in West Bengal also most of the cases were of temporary disability only and cases involving permanent disability or death were insignificant.\*

### *Industrial Relations:*

Details of various aspects of industrial relations which have been discussed for plantation workers in the Report hold good for workers employed in tea factories also.

Separate statistics of industrial disputes in the tea factories are not available and the statistics given for tea plantations cover the tea factories attached to such plantations also.

There were no separate trade unions of tea factory workers. These workers were members of the unions of plantation workers in the various centres. Details of estates having trade unions, their membership, etc., discussed for plantation workers in the Report included workers engaged in the tea factories also in such centres.

Similarly, collective agreements, Standing Orders, Works Committee and other Committees, etc., details of which have already been discussed in respect of plantation workers in the Report cover workers employed in tea factories also.

As has been mentioned in the Report, labour cost statistics given in Chapter VIII of the Report pertain to tea plantations as well as tea factories attached to such plantations.

\*The rate of accidents per thousand workers resulting in death and permanent disability was 0.18 and 0.09 in Assam and Tripura and 0.21 and 0.20 in West Bengal respectively.

